Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep? Study Guide

Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep? by Philip K. Dick

BOOKRAGS

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Introduction

The importance of Philip Kindred Dick may never be fully assessed or accepted by mainstream analysts of English literature. The reason is simply that Dick's chosen genre, science fiction, has little standing with academic critics. In addition, Dick's fiction can be incredibly difficult to grapple with. As Robert Scholes and Eric S. Rabkin noted in their *Science Fiction: History, Science, Vision,* "His work is not easy to discuss, Since it does not fall neatly into a few books of exceptional achievement and a larger body of lesser works All his books offer ideas, situations, and passages of considerable interest. None quite achieves that seamless perfection of form that constitutes one form of literary excellence." Nevertheless, Dick is widely regarded as a master of his chosen medium and through more than one hundred short stories, some fifty novels (mostly science fiction), many essays, and lectures, he has created a cult following around the world. Most people know him as the writer behind the epoch setting 1982 film *Blade Runner.* Sadly, few outside the science fiction community have read the more complex original work that formed the basis for the film, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*

In this novel, Dick furthers His exploration of his staple obsessions' What is reality? What does it mean to be human in a digital, mechanized world? Where, if anywhere, does one draw a line between the value of real and artificial life? *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* takes place on a post-nuclear apocalyptic Earth, where eight androids-artificially constructed humanoid robots have recently arrived after killing their human masters on Mars. Androids are not allowed on Earth and Mercer, the religious cult figure of the book, has declared that killers must be killed. The increasing difficulty of distinguishing androids from humans disturbs Rick Deckard, a bounty hunter called in to "retire" the fugitives. In a world where animal life is prized so highly that people buy artificial sheep to tend, why should androids be treated any differently? In examining these questions, the novel provides a brilliant pause for reflection on the meaning of human life and humanity's responsibility for the environment it is so determined to destroy

Author Biography

Son of Joseph Edgar Dick, a government employee, and his wife Dorothy Kindred, Philip K. Dick was born in Chicago in 1928 He lived most of his life in California, however, and spent his life commenting on America and encouraging Americans to break through to a better, less strife-filled reality. A music lover, Dick worked as an announcer on a classical music station, KSMO, in 1947, and worked in a record store from 1948 to 1952. In 1950 he attended the University of California at Berkeley, but dropped out because the University's requited ROTC courses conflicted with his antiwar convictions. Meanwhile, he had begun writing, and in 1952 sold his first story, "Roog," to the *Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction.* In the same year, *Planet Stories* published his more well-known short story "Beyond Lies the Wub."

In 1953, Dick published twenty-eight short stories, and another twenty-eight followed in 1954. After the success of *Solar Lottery* in 1955, he focused mainly on science fiction novels. In 1962, he won the Hugo Award for *The Man in the High Castle,* an "alternate reality" novel in which the United States has lost World War II and has been split by the Germans and Japanese. He was most prolific during the years 1964 to 1969, when he published sixteen volumes; *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* was part of this peak. In 1974, the author claimed to have had a mystical experience during which a "transcendentally rational mind" Inhabited his consciousness and straightened out his life This led him to explore religious themes in the novels *VALIS* (1981), *The Divine Invasion* (1981), and *The Transmigration of Timothy Archer* (1982)

During his lifetime, Dick was active in the antiwar, anti-abortion, and animal rights movements. He was also involved with drug rehabilitation programs, both out of concern for others and from personal experience. Like many artists of his generation, Dick viewed drug use as a tool for breaking through the reality of the everyday world and freeing the creative spirit. Drug use, Dick said, allowed him to experience as different a reality as possible and, therefore, to believe not only in alternate dystopic worlds but that a better world could be created. His 1965 novel *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch* explored issues of drug use and reality in its focus on a hallucinogen that never seems to wear off. Dick recognized, however, the toll that drug use had taken on him and others He suffered pancreatic damage and the use of amphetamines resulted in high blood pressure, which eventually led to the stroke which killed him

Dick died from heart failure after a stroke in March of 1982, soon after the release of *Blade Runner.* He was survived by five ex-wives and three children' Laura, Isolde, and Christopher. While Dick also wrote mainstream fiction-two novels of 1950s America, *Mary and the Giant* (1987) and *The Broken Bubble* (1988), were published posthumously-his greatest successes were within the genre that permitted him to explore questions of reality to the fullest. "My major preoccupation," Dick said, "is to question, 'What is reality?'" As the author wrote in an afterword to *The Golden Man:* "SF is a field of rebellion, against accepted ideas, institutions, against all that is in my writing I even question the universe; wonder out loud if it is real, and wonder out loud if all of us are real."

Plot Summary

The Situation

Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep? takes place in the year 1992, after World War Terminus has spread a cloud of radioactive dust across the globe. Many plant and animal species are extinct, and many of the surviving humans have emigrated to colonies on Mars. The remaining humans are divided between regulars and "specials," people who are either too stupid or too affected by radiation to be allowed to reproduce. As a result of these combined factors, cities are underpopulated and ownership of animals is considered both a status symbol and a sign of righteous empathy. Both real and imitation animals are expensive, with price lists updated monthly. In demand by Martian colonists are androids, manufactured to be as much like humans as possible, both in flesh and in emotion. Colonists are offered custom designed androids when they emigrate, and the androids serve as slaves. Discontented androids can escape from servitude by killing their masters and then returning to Earth to hide. Bounty hunters from Earth's various police forces are sent to locate these escapees and "retire" them. As the androids have become more human-like, retiring them has become more and more like killing.

The novel opens in the apartment of bounty hunter Rick Deckard and his wife, Iran. As he leaves for work, she tries to decide what mood to "dial up" for herself with their Penfield mood enhancing machine. Going to his car on the roof, Deckard stops to feed his electronic sheep. He takes a moment to admire his neighbor's real, living, horse. Upon hearing that the horse is pregnant, Rick's frustration surfaces and he admits to his neighbor that his sheep is false.

At work, his superior explains Deckard's new mission to him: eight androids have escaped from Mars, and San Francisco's lead bounty hunter, Dave Holden, has been shot down after retiring two. Deckard's first step is to go the androids' manufacturer, Rosen Association, to learn about this newest, most realistic model, the Nexus-6. The company's president, Eldon Rosen, doubts the accuracy of the "Voigt-Kampff" empathy test that the police use to distinguish androids from humans. His niece, Rachael, takes the test, and when it concludes that she is not human they assume that the test is flawed. The Rosens then attempt to bribe Deckard by offering him a real owl. Following a hunch, Deckard asks one last question that proves that his test results were accurate: Rachael Rosen is indeed an android.

Alternating with Deckard's story, the novel follows the day of John "J. R." Isidore, a "special" laborer with a low I.Q. who works for a veterinary clinic that cares for artificial animals. Isidore is a devotee of Wilbur Mercer, the religious figure that most people, including the Deckards, believe in. They relate to Mercer via "empathy boxes": they watch video images of him climbing a mountain, pelted with stones by skeptics, and when a stone hits Mercer the viewers who have real empathy for him will also bruise or bleed. Isidore is also a fan of Buster Friendly, the cheerful show business personality

who somehow hosts talk shows on both radio and television simultaneously for twenty-three hours a day. On this morning, Isidore comes across a strange woman, Pris Stratton, in one of the empty apartments in his building. She is mysteriously cold and factual, but the idea that she is an android does not occur to Isidore, both because he is desperately lonely and because of his limited mental capacity. Later that day, Isidore picks up a cat for repair and it expires in his van. Only later does he discover it was actually a living creature.

The Hunt

Deckard is assigned to work with a Soviet bounty hunter named Kadalyi while hunting the android named Max Polokov, who ambushed Dave Holden and put him in the hospital. Almost immediately after they meet, Deckard realizes that Kadalyi is Polokov, and retires him. The next android on his list is an opera singer, Luba Luft; he listens to her and is surprised at the quality of her voice. "Perhaps the better she functions, the better singer she is, the more I am needed," he muses. When Deckard interviews her at the opera house, she accuses him of being a sex criminal, and he is amused when she calls the police, certain that they will support him. The policeman who answers her call, though, is unfamiliar, and he takes Deckard to a police station that is not the Hall of Justice that he knows.

The investigating officer at this station, Inspector Garland, is the next name on Deckard's list of androids to retire. He tells Deckard that the bounty hunter in this parallel police force, Phil Resch, is also an android, but that he does not know it. When tests prove that Polokov was an android, Resch leaves to get equipment to test Garland. Garland pulls a laser when Resch returns, and Resch retires Garland in turn. He then goes with Deckard to the art museum, where they apprehend Luba Luft and retire her. The coolness with which Resch destroys androids seems to support Garland's claim that Resch is an android himself, but the test Deckard gives him proves that he is not. Deckard is disgusted with Resch's emotionless killing and how it reflects his own lack of empathy in dealing with androids. To affirm his humanity, he stops at the store and puts a down payment on an expensive live animal, a goat.

Deckard wants time to rest, and at home he uses the empathy machine on impulse. While using it, Mercer tells him "there is no salvation" and that he will always be "required to do wrong." Called by his office to find the remaining androids, Deckard takes up Rachael Rosen's offer of help. They meet at a San Francisco hotel room, drink, and become romantically involved. Rachael tells Deckard that she has fallen in love with him; later she admits that seducing him is a standard maneuver used to make bounty hunters feel uncomfortable about killing androids. On a lead from his department, Deckard goes to John Isidore's apartment building to find Pris Stratton. The remaining androids, Roy Baty and his wife Irmgard, are living at the building too, sheltered by the innocent Isidore.

While Deckard is on his way to the building, Isidore finds out two discouraging facts. The first comes when Buster Friendly announces on the television that Mercer is a

fraud, and supports his claim with expert analysis of the artificiality of Mercer's ascent up the mountain and evidence that Mercer is played by an old, unemployed, alcoholic character actor. Isidore's second revelation is that his android friends are not simply, like him, misunderstood, persecuted humans. When Isidore finds a rare spider, a living thing which he treasures, Irmgard Baty proceeds to snip its legs off out of curiosity, offering to pay Isidore the catalog price of the spider, ignorant to the inherent value of life. Roy Baty tells Isidore that "Mercerism is a swindle. The whole experience of empathy is a swindle."

When Deckard arrives, he runs into Isidore, who tells him that he is looking after the three androids and that he will not help Deckard capture them. Inside of the building Deckard is aided by an apparition of Mercer, the religious figure, who assures him that retiring androids is not contrary to the teachings of Mercerism:

Mercer said, "Mr. Isidore spoke for himself, not for me. What you are doing has to be done. I said that already." Raising his arm he pointed at the stairs behind Rick. "I came to tell you that one of them is behind you and below, not in the apartment. It will be the hard one of the three and you must retire it first." The rustling, ancient voice gained abrupt fervor. "Quick, Mr. Deckard. *On the steps.*"

The first android, Pris, is most difficult because she is the same model as Rachael Rosen and resembles her exactly. After retiring her, Deckard goes to the apartment and retires Irmgard Baty. Just before shooting Roy Baty, Deckard has a realization: that Baty loved his wife, Isidore loved Pris, and he himself loved Rachael, but that none of it mattered because they were all androids.

The Aftermath

Retiring six Nexus-6 androids in one day is a record-breaking achievement, and the bounty Deckard receives for it makes him wealthy. Nevertheless, the emotions stirred up by the day's events leave him depressed. His depression worsens when he returns home to find that Rachael Rosen, showing emotions that androids are not supposed to feel, has killed his goat. He flies off in a hovercar to a desolate area near Oregon, and climbs a hill in an imitation of Mercer. While analyzing the source of his depression, he makes an amazing discovery: in the dust at his feet is a toad, although toads are supposed to be extinct. With renewed faith, Deckard returns home to his wife Iran and shows this marvelous creature to her. While examining it she opens a panel in the toad's back, revealing that it is really just another mechanical animal. Deckard goes to bed feeling more depressed than ever, while Iran phones the pet store to find out what supplies are needed to take care of Deckard's mechanical toad in the best way possible.

Chapter 1

Chapter 1 Summary

The chapter begins with the protagonist Rick Deckard waking up in the morning. We learn that he has been awakened by something called a mood organ, and he gets out of bed immediately. He then attempts to wake up his wife Iran, who does not wish to wake up. The two begin a discussion of the settings of their mood organ, and Iran accuses him of being a murderer.

Rick disputes this claim by saying that he does not kill people, and his wife notes that he only kills "andys" (which we later learn means androids). Rick says that he would like to save his money to buy a sheep. We also learned that the mood organ could be used to create moods, and that both he and Iran can "dial" moods such as rage for happiness. Rather than fight with his wife, Rick chooses his "scheduled" mood and learns that his wife has learned how to program depression into the machine.

Iran says that the empty Apartments in their building depress her. Rick agrees, and the reader, learns that much of the city is unoccupied. Iran notes that she has scheduled this depression for twice a month. She thinks that is sufficient time to think about the fact that she and Rick have stayed on Earth well after everybody else has left. Rick expresses concern and suggests that they experience a "104" together (the meaning of this is not explained).

We learn that the mood organ can prompt many different emotions, from wanting to watch TV to sexual bliss. The two finally agree to have positive feelings for the day and Deckard prepares to leave for work. From a voice on the television, we learned that there will be an increase in radioactive fallout during the morning and that citizens should take special care and precautions. As Rick listens to the television, he speaks with Iran who is frustrated with having her moods altered by the mood organ.

On his way out, Rick "dials" emotions for both of them, including a feeling of "pleased acknowledgment of husband's superior wisdom" in Iran's feelings. He gives himself good feelings about the day, but the narrator lets us know that Rick does not really need mood stimulation because he is genuinely enthusiastic about his job.

We next see Rick on his way to the roof (wearing a lead codpiece, a covering over his genitalia to prevent radiation from making him sterile) to visit his electric sheep. This electric sheep is on the roof apparently eating hay, "bamboozling the other tenants." Rick reflects that some of these people probably also have electric animals, but that no one ever discusses these matters.

Rick then reflects on the radioactive content in the air. The narrator tells the reader that the radioactive dust and fallout was the result of "World War Terminus," which occurred sometime before the narrative and had killed a large number of people. We are also told

that Rick has been certified as "normal" and healthy by a doctor, but that eventually he will be classified as "special", no longer being be allowed to have children. Then, we learn that Rick works for the San Francisco Police Department, and cannot "emigrate" from Earth because of this job.

As Rick looks at his electric sheep, a neighbor named Bill Barbour tells Rick that his horse is pregnant. Rick asks about how the mare had been fertilized, and Barbour tells him that he purchased fertilizing plasma and that the State Animal Husbandry Board has inspected the horse and is very pleased. Rick asks Barbour if he would be willing to sell the horse, and then reflects that he would love to have a horse or any real animal. He also notes that keeping the electric sheep is an important part of being a part of the post-nuclear war society.

Barbour replies that he would not sell either the horse or the colt, and the two discuss a third man who owns five animals. Rick then notes he could buy a similar colt for $5,000. Barbour tells him that he would not be able to because the catalog that Rick refers to notes that horses are out of stock. Rick offers him $500 a month for 10 months and Barbour notes that Percherons (the breed of horse) are far more valuable because of their scarcity. Rick tries again by noting that it would be immoral (by the beliefs of "Mercerism") for Barbour to have two animals and for him to have none.

Barbour then refers to Rick's sheep, noting that everyone in the building has an animal. Rick reveals to him that his sheep is a fake and tells Barbour that he once had a real sheep that died of tetanus. Rick says that he would love to buy a real animal but that he just cannot afford to on his salary. Barbour sympathizes with Rick, promising not to tell anyone. He suggests a cat, but Rick states emphatically that he wants a larger animal.

Rick then ponders the fact that retiring five "andys" (androids) would get him enough money to afford a new horse. However, he rejects this thought after considering that it would be highly unlikely that five androids would come to Earth from the colony planets to settle in his area, and even then, his colleague and fellow bounty hunter Dave Holden would have the first chance at the bounty.

Jest before Rick leaves, Barbour makes a sarcastic remark that Rick could buy a cricket. Rick responds that Barbour's horse could die just as his sheep had. Barbour is startled by Rick's chilling words and apologizes, but Rick gets in his hovercar and leaves.

Chapter 1 Analysis

This chapter introduces several key concepts and symbols that will play important roles in the novel. The first of these is the blurring of the lines between real and artificial. Iran demonstrates the difficulty in determining this through her dislike of the mood organ – she is rebelling against this mood organ because she finds that it is masking her true feelings of despair. This image of the truth of an organic concept being hidden behind a machine will be repeated throughout the book.

Rick is the protagonist, and so we learn the most about him in the first chapter. Like Iran, Rick seems to be in a kind of despair but his despair occurs because he is so worried about living up to what society expects of him. Although he knows he will one day become a "special" because of the radiation, Rick is more worried about keeping up appearances. Examples of this type of thinking include his desire for a "real" animal because society expects him to have one, his constant references to the need to follow the philosophy of Mercerism.

The mood organ itself is an important symbol because it demonstrates that humans seem to need help feeling emotions. As readers, we are left to wonder why there is so much emphasis on keeping things "real" in the play (with real animals and the evident societal bias against androids) when characters are not even able to develop and experience their own emotions. The other important symbol displayed in the first chapter is the electric sheep, which symbolizes the confusion between real and artificial – real humans buy fake sheep to fool other real humans.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2 Summary

This chapter begins in a deserted building, which we learn was deserted after World War Terminus. The narrator tells readers more about this war, discussing how this building's owner has likely emigrated and how a once busy suburb of San Francisco is now empty. We also learn that no one "remembered why the war had come about or who, if anyone, had won." The narrator describes a nuclear winter scenario with dust and fallout blocking the sun, and how people were surprised when animals began dying.

This surprise was followed by the rapid development of a colonization program for other planets. While war machines were adapted to ferry humans to other planets, humanoid robots (androids) were built to perform labor and were used as an incentive to get people to emigrate from Earth. The narrator notes that emigration was a popular choice for many humans, but that a few people decided to stay behind, which can be categorized in two groups.

The first people are described as having many different motives for wanting to stay, but having almost all decided to live in small urban groupings, these are the normal people like Rick, Iran, and their neighbor. The second group is described as nomadic wanderers who live in the deserted suburbs. We are then introduced to John Isidore, who belongs to the second group.

Isidore, we are told, had wandered to this building in the days following the war because the San Francisco peninsula had been dust free and was a popular spot for the mostly nomadic population of the planet. We first see him listening to the television, which is promoting emigration to Mars. A statement from television that emigration removes the worry of post-war Earth (specifically, the worry that radiation will eventually make people "special") causes Isidore to think about his own situation. From that, he concludes that he need not worry about stress because he has recently been classified as a "special" with an IQ too low to qualify for emigration.

We also learn that he has failed the "minimum mental faculties test," making him a "chickenhead." Despite being classified in the lowest functioning group of humans left on the planet, Isidore has a job working for a false-animal repair firm. Isidore also notes that there are lower functioning chickenheads although these people were housed in institutions. As the television goes on about what a good idea it is to emigrate, Isidore turns it off and spends some time thinking about how silent the world has become, especially in deserted buildings such as this one.

Isidore describes the silence as almost another living character in the scene, and wonders if other people experienced the same void. His rather grim view of the world allows him to foresee a time when the buildings in his suburb will fall apart, allowing the silence to prevail. He finds this a frightening thought, and contemplates turning the

television back on. However, he notes the television is also frightening because it is targeted at the "remaining regulars," and that it "reminds him in a countless procession of ways that he, a special, wasn't wanted."

Isidore then starts to leave for work, but his fear stops him. Instead, he goes to his "empathy box," a device that apparently uses ions and electrical energy to stimulate feelings in its user. The device is also interactive, allowing the user to experience a story. The story is of a man named Wilbur Mercer who climbs up a hillside on an alien planet. The box allows Isidore to feel every sensation that Mercer does, to essentially, become one with Wilbur Mercer as a way to embrace his philosophy and doctrine.

As Isidore climbs further with Mercer, he becomes aware of other people using their empathy boxes at the same time. This is apparently one of the features of the empathy box. It becomes clear that the story is meant to inspire the user to persevere in the face of difficulties. One of these difficulties is a rock, which strikes Mercer (and Isidore's) arm. Mercer eventually reaches the top, and overcomes a feeling of self-pity.

We then learn more about Mercer through his feelings and memories (which Isidore shares). Mercer was an orphan rescued by foster parents Frank and Cora Mercer, who raised him in a happy environment although he cannot remember whether it was on Earth or on another planet. However, at some point a group known as "the killers" chased him and arrested him as a freak.

We soon find out that Mercer possessed a mental ability that allowed him to reverse time and bring animals back to life. This ability was forbidden in post-war society, and so, the killers use radiation to destroy the part of his brain that contains this ability. The journey that is the basis for the empathy box is Mercer's recovery of his ability, as he feels himself climbing out of a pit filled with the bones of dead animals he has revived accompanied somehow by the spirits of these animals.

The end of the empathy box experience comes when Mercer reaches the very top of the hill he is climbing, but Isidore is afraid to continue the experience. This is because Mercer begins to be persecuted by people around him, and the experience becomes very real – Isidore suffers a cut on his arm from a thrown rock. We learn that people have become so immersed in the empathic experience that they have had heart attacks, and that some buildings have machines on hand to revive people.

Isidore stops the experience and resumes preparing for work. He hears another television set in the building and realizes someone else has moved into the building. He hurries off with a housewarming gift to present to the new resident.

Chapter 2 Analysis

This chapter introduces another character, and the concept of a "chickenhead." Isidore is presented as a sympathetic character, however, despite his lack of mental capacity. We also learn quite a bit about the war and its aftermath, and especially about the way in which people like Isidore are treated by the rest of society. The class system that has

developed continues the theme of trying to decipher what is real and what is not, as even people are classified as "regular" or "special."

In addition, we learn about Mercerism. Although it is not stated outright, it is clear that Mercer has become a central figure in post-war society because of his reverence for animals. The journey that the empathy box creates is designed to buoy people's spirits, as well as to implant the mood and tenets of Mercerism directly into the brain in the same way that a mood organ does in the first chapter. This once again begs the question of whether humans can experience real emotions or need to have them created by a machine.

There are many symbols in the chapter. Isidore himself is a symbol of what will eventually happen to all the "regulars" who have chosen or been forced to stay on Earth. He is also a symbol of the despair of a population that has experienced a horrifying nuclear war. The building he lives in is a symbol both of the war and of the depopulation of the Earth, which has occurred because of the war and emigration to colony planets.

Chapter 3

Chapter 3 Summary

This chapter begins with Rick looking at an ostrich in a pet store before heading to work. There his boss Police Inspector Harry Bryant tells him that the senior bounty hunter Dave Holden has been injured after being shot trying to retire an android. We also learn that the Rosen Corporation makes the Nexus-6 android brain, which makes androids very smart and hard to detect. Another important revelation in the chapter is that empathy testing, which detects emotions, is used to detect androids.

Rick also finds out that Bryant has requested help from police in the Soviet Union. He then reviews some material on the Nexus-6, noting to himself that although this android could defeat intelligence testing - no android could defeat empathy testing. He also reflects that only humans could experience empathy, although intelligence was fairly, universal amongst living creatures. He also thinks about Mercerism, about how his job does not violate Mercer's rule of life - "kill only the killers." Androids, which escape to Earth, have done so by killing their masters on the colony planets, making it acceptable to retire (kill) them.

Rick then phones the pet shop to haggle with them over the price of the ostrich. The salesperson stands firm on the price of $29,000. Rick then phones a fake animal dealer to find that an electric ostrich would cost him only $800. Next, he heads for Bryant's office, reflecting that he feels depressed even though Holden's injury promotes him to head bounty hunter.

Chapter 3 Analysis

This short chapter introduces the reader to more details about androids, as well as how Rick and other bounty hunters are able to detect them. The android becomes a symbol of progress since androids are developed and improved, requiring more sophisticated testing to tell them apart from human beings.

We also learn more about Mercerism, which helps to explain Rick's obsession with animals. The ostrich, priced well beyond what he can afford, is symbolic of this obsession. Mercerism, which was at first scorned by society, has undergone a struggle to become the dominant theology, while androids and fake animals are seen as "the easy way out." This is particularly symbolized by the cheap price of the fake ostrich when compared with the real thing.

Chapter 4

Chapter 4 Summary

Rick and Bryant begin discussing the eight Nexus-6 androids that have escaped to Earth. Holden, we learn has retired two of the eight, and has left notes and information on the last six. Before giving Rick the information, Bryant sends him to the Rosen Corporation in Seattle to use the Voigt-Kampff empathy test on some androids using the Nexus-6 brain. Bryant also expresses concern about Rick's ability, noting the android with the name Max Polokov is the one who shot Holden while he was administering the empathy test.

The two also discuss the possibility of humans failing the empathy test. Rick protests that it is not possible, but Bryant points out that if it did happen, Rick would be guilty of violating Mercer's law, even though the only humans who could fail would theoretically be institutionalized as psychotics. However, Bryant is still concerned about the possibility and wants Rick to investigate with it the Rosen people before starting to hunt for the escaped androids.

Rick flies to Seattle, where he meets Rachael Rosen at Rosen headquarters. Rachael expresses her displeasure that Rick and his colleagues believe androids are bad, but Rick refuses to debate the matter with her. He notices that the Rosen Corporation has a large collection of animals, including an extremely rare raccoon. When Rick sees an owl (the first animals to become extinct after the war) he believes it to be fake, but Rachael tells him it is real and has been rescued from the Canadian wilderness. Rick offers to buy it, an offer Rachael declines.

As the two head to the area where Rick will begin testing androids, they discuss the Nexus-6. Throughout their exchange Rachael expresses a dislike of Rick and his methods, as well as a regret that if the Nexus-6 androids defeat the empathy test they will have to be taken off the market. When Eldon Rosen joins them, Rick realizes that the corporation is worried about this possibility, and he is "content" with the feeling of power this gives him.

His contentment lasts only until he sees that Rosen has received an animal catalog supplement ahead of its release date. He then explains the test to Rachael, noting that it measures responses of facial muscles and capillary dilation after the test subject has been exposed to "morally shocking stimulus." He then learns that Rachael may or may not be an android and will be his first test subject.

Chapter 4 Analysis

Several interesting concepts are introduced in this chapter. The idea of an empathy test shows that compassion and empathy are highly valued in the post-war world, and that this is what separates human beings from androids. This is ironic when the reader

considers that a machine (the mood organ) creates many of the human feelings in the novel. Rick is anxious to move on with his work, thinking he is an expert; his boss, however, believes that the people who run Rosen Corporation are the real android experts.

Both Rick and Bryant seem to be more focused on killing androids than on dealing with the vital social issues that arise in their discussion. The "chickenheads" who might fail the test are not very highly regarded (even though they both acknowledge that killing one of them would be a serious crime). Worse still is the "warehousing" of specials in institutions, which introduces the theme of dehumanization that will become more and more important as the story progresses.

In Rick's mind, the Rosen Corporation comes to symbolize corporate greed, and he immediately tries to find fault with everything he sees. The as-yet-unreleased animal catalog he sees is a symbol of this greed, as is the owl - it seems that even in post-war society money can buy anything. The owl also becomes a symbol of all the animals that have been lost to extinction and the fact that Rick wants to own it confirms that animals have become the new "status symbol," a sign that people have money and power.

Chapter 5

Chapter 5 Summary

Rick begins administering the test on Rachael. He explains that she will be asked a series of questions in a limited time, during which a sensor disk and a small beam of light will measure her responses. The questions deal with images of dead animals, designed to shock people in a society where animals are highly valued. However, Rachael's responses barely register at first and then taper off to nothing although she does react to a question about abortion, which, we learn, is illegal in post war society.

After several questions, Rick stops the test and tells Rachael and Eldon Rosen that she is an android. The two refuse to confirm whether she is or not, insisting that she failed the empathy test because she was raised apart from other humans on a cargo ship in space. They note that she stays in the building most of the time to keep safe from police who search constantly for specials and androids.

Rick accepts their explanation, and begins to leave. The three of them discuss the ramifications of the test, and Rosen explains that the Rosen Corporation started making more life-like androids in response to the desires of colonists. He also notes that if Rachael could fail the test, it is possible that the police have killed real humans who also failed the test. Rick notes bitterly to himself that a large corporation has fooled him, and that he will not be given the chance to test a real Nexus-6 android.

Rosen then points out that Rick had been under observation the whole time. To prevent him from being shamed with the tape of the test, Rosen offers him the owl in return for Rick falsifying the results so that the corporation can continue making Nexus-6 androids. They haggle over the terms of how he would take possession of the owl, until they tell Rick that he would have to will the owl back to the corporation. Rick objects to this, and they agree he can will the owl to his heirs but must give any offspring back to the corporation.

Rick asks for some time, and then he asks to retest Rachael. He then notes that there is a reaction time between the question and her response. This proves to him that she is an android, which Rosen then confirms. He tells Rick that she was programmed to believe she was human, and tells her that she does not have to fear being retired because she is a "sales device."

Rick then learns that the owl is also a fake. As it flies away, he ponders the duplicity of the Rosen Corporation, and reflects that the Nexus-6 is a reflection of this duplicity. He prepares himself for the difficulties ahead, and looks forward to the bounty he will earn.

Chapter 5 Analysis

The questions on the empathy test reaffirm the fact that animals have become the most important and valuable thing on Earth. That they are even more valuable than humans is confirmed by the fact that most of the questions on the test deal with preserving animal life, rather than human life.

Rick is also forced to start questioning his beliefs (briefly, at least) when he learns that Rachael is not an android. However, his faith is reaffirmed when he discovers she is in fact an android. This is not the last time that Rick will be forced to confront his moral surety. The novel takes him through several cycles of believing that he has power and knowledge, only to see this power and knowledge destroyed by new evidence.

The other important revelation in the chapter is that the Rosen Corporation has created an android that can almost beat the most sophisticated empathy test available. This once again blurs the line between what is real and what is artificial.

Chapter 6

Chapter 6 Summary

This chapter starts with Isidore standing outside his new neighbor's apartment. We hear the TV blasting away, with the host Buster Friendly giving a weather report that talks about fallout rather than rain or sunshine. He knocks on the door, and when no one answers, he tells the person who he is. The door is answered by a woman who seems very afraid, is naked from the waist up and is glad to learn he is the only other person in the building.

Isidore sees that she has just moved in, and that she seems bewildered by his offer of a cube of margarine. She also does not seem to know who Buster Friendly is, which surprises Isidore. She refuses to tell him where she came from, and tells him that she does not want company. Isidore looks around her apartment and offers to help her find nicer furniture from other apartments in the building. When she says that she will do that alone, Isidore is surprised and tells her about how the other apartments are full of the possessions and mementos of dead people and their families.

He also explains the concept of "kipple," which is junk. He says that kipple reproduces, and that although he has cleared a small kipple-free area, no one can keep kipple from taking over living space. The girl seems to be trying to understand, but then he finds out that she has no empathy box. He tells her that an empathy box is the most important part of Mercerism, mostly because Mercer accepts people like himself.

When she tells him she does not support Mercerism, he believes it is because the philosophy embraces chickenheads so he tries to leave. She tells him to come back after work to help her get furniture. When he asks her to make dinner and she refuses, he begins to sense that she is cold and distant. He tells her his name and she says she is Rachael Rosen.

When Isidore asks her if she is related to the Rosen Corporation, the girl claims never to have heard of Rosen Corporation and accuses him of "chickenhead imagination." She then says her name is Pris Stratton and that he can call her Miss Stratton.

Chapter 6 Analysis

Isidore himself is a symbol of how "specials" have lost their intelligence. As readers, we see innumerable signs that Stratton is an android with her lack of modesty, no empathy box, and ignorance of the food Isidore has brought her. However, Isidore sees only a new friend whom he feels is as lonely as he is. He is briefly crushed when he thinks she is about to shun him for being a special, but he is elated when she tells him to come back that evening.

Stratton is the first android (apart from Rachael Rosen) that we see, and she embodies several of the characteristics we will later learn are common in androids. She is cold and distant, shows no real feeling for anything and has trouble understanding the human characteristics that Isidore describes. She is also calculating, as shown by her decision to use Isidore to outfit her apartment.

Chapter 7

Chapter 7 Summary

Following his rejection by Pris Stratton, Isidore returns to his apartment and plans to cook her dinner. He thinks about several funny things about her, including the fact that she does not seem to know about the famous Buster Friendly. He also ponders whether she needs help, but concludes that his status as a chickenhead prevents him from being able to assist her in any way.

We next see Isidore at his job, taking a broken electronic cat back to the repair shop. When the fake animal wheezes, he stops his truck to recharge it before it damages too much of its circuitry. He marvels at the realistic construction of the cat, and cannot find the charging circuits. The animal stops wheezing, and he reflects that even the fake wheezes bother him. He then expresses his regret at being a special, doomed to diminishing faculty and eventually death.

As he drives, he listens to the Buster Friendly show on the radio. We learn that Buster Friendly has several regular guests and is on the air for 23 hours a day. Isidore marvels at how Buster Friendly finds time to be on both radio and television for so much time each day, as well as how he and his guests are always cheery, never seeming to tire. In addition, he comments to himself that Friendly scorns the empathy boxes, which Isidore quite likes. He concludes that in a very real way Friendly is fighting with Mercer for "control of [the] psychic selves" of all human beings.

Isidore arrives at the Van Ness Pet Hospital, and takes the fake cat into the building. We see his boss Hannibal Sloat for the first time. Sloat is described as an older man who has been "eroded" by years of exposure to radioactive dust. He and Sloat discuss his theory about Buster Friendly contending with Mercer for people's souls, and Sloat agrees. Sloat tells Isidore that Friendly and all his guests are immortal, just like Mercer.

Sloat and repairperson, Milt Borogrove then discuss the fact that the cat Isidore brought in is real. They ridicule Isidore for his stupidity and marvel that the cat's owner had not taken the animal to a real veterinarian. Then, they discuss who will call and tell the cat's owner, with Sloat insisting that Isidore should call. This prospect appears to terrify Isidore, but he agrees to do it after Sloat threatens to fire him.

Isidore tells the owner's wife that the cat has died, and offers her a new cat. During the phone call, it becomes clear that the owners did not realize they had contacted an artificial animal repair shop. Isidore suggests an exact artificial duplicate of her cat, and the woman says that that would not be acceptable. Borogrove takes over the conversation and offers to tell her husband that the cat died. She then decides to get an artificial cat made, and Borogrove tells her it will be ready in ten days.

Both Sloat and Borogrove tell Isidore that he did a good job. Sloat tells him to order the replacement cat, making sure that the builders (Wheelright & Carpenter) do not keep the real cat so that they can compare the two once the replica has been built. The chapter ends with Isidore wondering whether dead cats decay or not.

Chapter 7 Analysis

Dick uses irony in this chapter to demonstrate just how well the population is fooled. As the reader examines Isidore's account of Buster Friendly's broadcast schedule, it becomes clear that only androids could keep up with this schedule. We are left to wonder how long this charade can be going on, and just who is behind the mass deception.

The dead cat in this chapter becomes another symbol of the difficulty of determining what is real and what is not. Because Isidore works for a discrete service aimed at preserving the illusion that people's animals are real (thus ensuring the customer retains his or her social status as an animal owner), he assumes that the customer knows they have contacted a repair shop rather than a real pet hospital.

At the same time, Sloat and Borogrove's teasing attitude toward Isidore show that he, as a special, is in a sense their "pet." They toy with and tease Isidore without regard to his feelings, showing the common societal attitude that specials are somehow less than human. Their treatment demonstrates why Isidore is so eager to embrace Stratton and her group of friends later on in the novel.

Chapter 8

Chapter 8 Summary

This chapter returns the reader to the Rick Deckard storyline, where he has returned to San Francisco to see his superior. He asks to go visit Holden in the hospital, and Bryant urges him to go after Polokov first. Polokov is pretending to be a special, he says, and works as a garbage collector. Bryant asks whether Rick is sure of the Voigt-Kampff empathy test, and Rick assures him that he has no doubts.

Rick tells Bryant that he will now go after Polokov and then plan to talk to Holden later on. Bryant informs him that a Soviet police officer will join him to learn more about Nexus-6 androids, telling Rick that he will not have to split the bounty with this cop. Rick is pleased with this, and the two plans for him to meet up with the Soviet cop after Rick retires Polokov.

Rick starts his search for Polokov at the garbage company where Polokov has been working. He learns that Polokov did not show up for work that day, instructing the manager not to tell Polokov that the police are looking for him. Rick then goes to Polokov's apartment and reflects that he can simply shoot Polokov because the empathy test has already been administered. He sets up a device that will stun everyone in the building and enters Polokov's apartment.

After finding no signs of Polokov, Rick decides that the android has run away and deprived him of his bounty. He leaves the apartment and calls Bryant to offer to pick up the Soviet police officer Kadalyi at the airfield. Bryant tells him Kadalyi is already in the city and will join Rick at Polokov's building. Rick then begins looking over the information on the next android, who is posing as an opera singer named Luft.

While Rick is planning how he will approach Luft, he receives a video phone call from Rachael Rosen in Seattle. She says that Rosen Corporation wants him to have a Nexus-6 android with him to help him with the escaped androids. Rachael offers to help him as a way to make up for tricking him. Rick refuses, and marvels at the thought of an android offering to help a bounty hunter.

Kadalyi arrives in a taxi, and he and Rick greet each other. Rick looks at Kadalyi's laser pistol, and finds that it is missing its trigger circuit. Kadalyi tells him the circuit is a part of his hand, and Rick activates a laser scattering device and accuses him of being Polokov. Polokov tries to shoot him using the remote trigger and then says he will break Rick's neck. Rick shoots him with his revolver.

After calming down, Rick calls the police station and tells them to tell Bryant that he has retired Polokov. After reflecting on the experience, Rick calls Iran to tell her about the bounty he has earned. He finds that she has reprogrammed the mood organ for depression, and hangs up. He then leaves for the opera house after reflecting that,

"Most androids I've known have more vitality and desire to live than my wife." He also thinks that some female androids have excited him sexually, but not Rachael Rosen.

Then, he reflects on the difficulty he had retiring Polokov, deciding that if Luft "proves exceptionally hard" he will call Rachael and her for help. He is happy and optimistic as he approaches the opera house.

Chapter 8 Analysis

This chapter shows the reader just how a bounty hunter operates, as we see Rick go through what almost seems like a normal criminal investigation. Polokov has a life, a job and a home, and the fact that he will be killed at the end of this investigation is a jarring reminder to the reader that Rick is hunting someone who is not human.

Rick switches roles in this chapter from being the hunter to being hunted, as Polokov himself shows just how advanced androids have become. Rick's relief at having survived is described in organic terms, as Dick goes to great length to describe his biological functions. This leaves the reader with no doubt as to his humanity, even though Rick's response to killing androids may seem very much like the "flat affect" he and Bryant discussed in Chapter 4.

Rachael's offer to help Rick is an intriguing one, and demonstrates Rick's belief that androids do not feel empathy toward one another. However, his attitude toward female androids shows that he does find something appealing about androids. This is especially demonstrated by the contrast between the energetic androids and his cold, depressed wife.

Chapter 9

Chapter 9 Summary

Rick enters the opera house and listens to a rehearsal of *The Magic Flute*. The opera house is described as "the enormous whale-belly of steel and stone." Rick listens to one of the singers sing a passage about a magic bell that make enemies disappear. He then thinks about Mozart's tragic death of kidney disease, and decides that humanity will eventually be wiped out in the same way that the androids he hunts are destroyed.

He sees Luba Luft on stage, and is impressed by her voice. He thinks about his role as an android killer, and then decides that his job is even more necessary when androids are as beautiful or as talented as humans are. When rehearsal stops, Rick follows the performers backstage and prepares to test Luft to be sure she is an android. He knocks and enters her dressing room. He compliments her singing, and then tells her he is from the police and is there to administer a personality test.

Luft objects and tries to get her glasses. Rick assures her it is fine, that he is administering an empathy test. Luft assures him that she is not an android, and then offers to help him find any androids in the cast. Rick notes that androids do not care about other androids, and Luft accuses him of being an android. She asks if he has taken the empathy test, and when he says "yes," she offers the opinion that he may have a false memory of taking the test. Rick cuts off her objections to the test, and begins asking her the questions.

He first asks her about a wasp crawling on her arm, stalling until he decides she will not be able to give him a worthwhile answer. He then asks about people eating a boiled dog, and Luft again talks about other things rather than answering. Moving on to another question, he is again stopped by her inane chatter. After asking part of another question, he sees Luft remove the testing apparatus. He reaches on the floor to retrieve it, and Luft surprises him with a laser pistol.

Rick tries to talk his way out of the situation and is unsuccessful. Luft calls the police, and Crams arrives to question Rick. Crams tells Rick that neither he nor Bryant has any connection with the police department. Rick realizes Crams is an android and calls Bryant, who asks to speak with the officer. When Crams approaches the video phone, however, Bryant is no longer on the line.

Crams then dials the police department, and after a conversation decides to take Rick to the Hall of Justice. Rick and Crams proceed to the roof and look at Polokov's remains. They enter the patrol car and Crams tells Rick that the Hall of Justice has moved. Rick asks to see the old Hall of Justice, and Crams tells him that he is likely an android with a false memory. Rick thinks that he has failed as he and Crams land at the new location.

Chapter 9 Analysis

Rick is almost fooled once again by a Nexus-6 android in this chapter. Even as he administers the empathy test, Luba Luft manages to use logic (in the form of turning his own questions against him) to distract and delay Rick until she can find an opportunity to pull her laser pistol on him.

Once Rick is subdued, he is forced to start questioning his own humanity. This is an interesting example of the way that the intelligent androids dehumanize Rick in that they strip away his contact with the outside world, causing him to doubt his own humanity. However, Rick is determined to discover the truth, as evidenced by his asking to see the "old" police hall.

Mozart's opera, *The Magic Flute*, serves as an important symbol. The act that Rick walks in on starts with a character named Papageno, who tells fantastic lies, then is chastised for these lies. Papageno uses deceit and magic to escape from his enemies, and turns out to be a hero despite his lying. The play symbolizes Rick's recognition that Luft has beauty and talent, despite living a deceptive life as an illegal android on Earth.

Chapter 10

Chapter 10 Summary

Rick and Crams arrive at the new Hall of Justice, which Rick has never seen, and begin the process of checking Rick in. The procedures seem very similar to Rick but he realizes he is seeing a parallel police organization. He is accused of suspected homicide and impersonating an officer and is interrogated by an officer named Garland. Rick offers to let him administer the empathy test on him, and asks to call his wife. After dialing his home number, he reaches a woman who is not Iran.

Garland takes Rick into his office where they discuss the Voigt-Kampff test, which Garland says he has never heard of. After reviewing Rick's briefcase, Garland notes that he is the next android target. Garland calls a bounty hunter named Phil Resch into the room. The three discuss Rick's targets: Garland, Luft, and Polokov. Resch agrees that Polokov was probably an android, and confesses that he had always wanted to test Polokov.

Garland and Resch then get into a discussion about Rick and his motives. A secretary calls to report that Polokov was indeed an android, and then Resch and Rick compare empathy tests. Rick offers to take an empathy test, and asks if Resch and Garland will as well.

Chapter 10 Analysis

The androids' efforts to deceive Rick continue here as he tries to find the truth of his situation. The phone call to Iran again causes Rick to question everything he believes about his life. The fact that all the police procedures are identical to what Rick is familiar with accentuates his doubts, as does the fact that the other characters start to question whether he is himself an android.

The lists of suspected androids that both he and Resch carry are an important symbol of what is real and what is not. Though working for parallel organizations, each possesses a list (though where it comes from is unknown) that helps them to find androids. The reader is left to puzzle over the questions of who provides these lists, and how that person or agency knows whom to suspect.

Chapter 11

Chapter 11 Summary

After Resch leaves to get the testing equipment, Garland pulls a laser gun on Rick. Rick tells him that shooting him will not stop Resch from checking both himself and Garland. Garland then confesses to being an android and tells Rick that Resch does not know he is an android as well. He also tells Rick that everyone on his list is an android also. They discuss what Resch will do when he discovers he is an android. Garland tells Rick that Polokov came to Earth in a different group, and was likely a very advanced modification of the Nexus-6 design.

Garland informs Rick that the parallel police department is "a closed loop, cut off from the rest of San Francisco," which is why Rick's phone calls failed. Garland ridicules Resch for being eager to discover androids (and in doing so ruin his own and Garlands' lives). When Rick notes that androids do not "cover for each other," Garland responds that this is because androids do not have empathy.

As Resch reenters the office, Garland points a laser at him. Resch kills Garland and then asks Rick what was said while he was out of the room. Rick does not tell Resch that he is android, and Resch makes plans for the two to leave the "android-infested" fake police station. Resch notes that Rick will have to go back and retire Luba Luft, and Rick agrees. The two leave the building handcuffed together, and Resch asks if Rick thinks the real police department will hire him. Rick says no, and decides that it would be cruel not to tell him he is an android.

As the two talk, Resch begins to suspect that he has been implanted with a fake memory system. The two stop speaking and head back to the opera house. Resch asks Rick to give him an empathy test and Rick tries to keep him focused on retiring Luft. Resch tells Rick that he owns a squirrel, and is clearly tormented by the fact that he has all sorts of human wants and needs despite being an android.

Chapter 11 Analysis

Garland exhibits once again that the Nexus-6 android brain is capable of advanced deception and organization. The fact that an entire agency has been created to deceive human beings is evidence that the android "problem" on Earth goes far beyond what Rick or any other bounty hunter has thought possible.

Garland is also very convincing, making Rick believe that Resch is an android. The fact that Resch begins to believe this is a symbol of the doubts that can be created in post-war society: like Rick, he is forced to confront all that he believes (or all that he believes he remembers he believes). The truth is an illusory concept, and this makes the empathy tests (both Rick's faithful Voigt-Kampff test and the new test Resch introduces

him to) an important tool – the only one humans can use to sort out who is real and who is artificial.

Chapter 12

Chapter 12 Summary

Rick and Resch return to the opera house and learn Luft has gone to the museum to an Edvard Munch exhibit. They go to the museum, and Resch asks Rick if he has ever known an android to have a pet, as he has a squirrel. Rick says that androids cannot keep warm-blooded animals alive for very long. The two study Munch's painting *The Scream* and Resch compares the figure's agony to that of an android.

Rick spots Luba Luft studying Munch's *Puberty*. She is surprised to see him there. He and Resch take her into custody, and she tells Resch he is an android just like her. She also asks Rick to buy her a print of the painting she had been looking at. Rick buys her a Munch print book. She tells him that she does not like androids, and she teases Resch. Resch fires at her and misses and Rick kills her in the elevator and then burns the print book with his laser.

Rick then tells Resch that he is probably an android, and that he will give him an empathy test when they get to the roof. Resch wonders whether Garland had told Rick that Resch was an android to split them up. Rick notes that he is going to quit bounty hunting and go into insurance underwriting, which Garland had claimed to do or emigrate to Mars. He goes on to say that he thinks it was a waste to kill someone as talented as Luft and that humans are overreacting to the android "threat."

Resch again mentions his squirrel, and offers to give it to Rick if he is retired. When they reach the roof, Rick goes to a phone booth to summon a patrol car. He reflects that Luft's talent was not a threat to society, but the fact that she was an android was a threat. He tells Resch that he is a cold-blooded killer, and wonders if he will kill himself after he fails the empathy test. Resch says that he will do so by holding his breath, noting that it is possible for an android to kill himself this way.

They return to the opera house where Rick prepares to administer the test. Resch continues to insist he will pass the test, which he does. The two then discuss the fact that Rick has empathic responses to female androids and Resch tells him that this is because he wants to have sex with an android. Resch tells him that the cure for his empathic response is for Rick to have sex with an android and then kill it.

Chapter 12 Analysis

Munch's *The Scream* becomes a powerful symbol in this chapter. Resch's interpretation of the painting shows that he has empathy for androids, or at least he does when he believes he may be one. The painting also becomes a symbol of the anguish humans feel in post-war society. This anguish comes from several sources, as Resch says. Mostly, it comes from the lack of emotions that humans seem to feel. Resch is confronted with a serious dilemma about the nature of his existence, and he seems

"stuck" not knowing how to feel, perhaps, the reader may wonder, he needs his mood organ to help him find the appropriate emotion.

The other Munch painting, "*Puberty,"* is also an important symbol. The android Luft has obviously been programmed with an interest in the arts because she is impersonating an opera singer. She is also interested in the painting because it represents an important stage in human development, a stage that she herself cannot experience except through implanted memories.

Another important contrast in this chapter is between Resch and Rick. While it may have appeared that Rick was cold-blooded in his pursuit of androids, Resch takes this cold-bloodedness to a much higher level. At the same time, there is logic to Resch's motivation as he points out that all the androids have killed humans to reach Earth.

The final symbol in this chapter is Resch's squirrel. Once again, we see that humans seem to care far more about animals than they do people, and this is emphasized by the fact that Resch is more worried about what happens to his squirrel than what happens to himself.

Chapter 13

Chapter 13 Summary

This chapter starts with Isidore headed home from work after having stopped at a "black-market grocery store" to buy several hard to find food items. We learn that his purchases cost him two weeks' salary, and that he has a bottle of wine he had been saving. He goes to Pris Stratton's apartment and enters. She is excited to see the food, but says that food is wasted on her. Isidore tells her she is just lonely because she has no friends. She replies that she had seven friends that the bounty hunters have killed some or all of them.

Isidore does not know about bounty hunters, so Stratton explains the basics and leaves out the fact that bounty hunters go after androids. Isidore refuses to believe her, and believes she is crazy. He offers to protect her. She notes that Polokov, Garland, Luft and three others were her friends. She adds that two in particular (Roy and Irmgard Baty) were her best friends.

As Isidore prepares the food, she eats some peach and talks about androids. Isidore believes she has come back to Earth after emigrating to Mars. She notes that Mars is lonely, and when Isidore mentions the androids, she says that the androids are lonely too. She says that they came back to Earth because it was dull and cold on Mars. She adds that pre-war science fiction about Mars had been completely wrong with its ideas about canals and beautiful space explorers. She says that all pre-war literature is wrong and useless, mostly because it raises unreal expectations about life.

There is a knock on the door, and Stratton makes Isidore answers it. There at the door are Roy and Irmgard Baty, who greet Stratton warmly.

Chapter 13 Analysis

The food that Isidore buys is an important symbol of the way post-war society operates. All of his treasures date from before the war, and all have been classified as black market. As such, they are highly valuable to humans, and the way that Stratton eats them quite absently demonstrates how little value androids attach to these delicacies.

Stratton's cynicism shows when she talks about the misconceptions humans had about space before the war. What she is really trying to get across, however, is that her position as an android in space was not at all glamorous – the androids given to colonists are essentially slaves, forced to perform tasks ranging from manual labor to sex. As such, they probably have every reason to want to escape back to Earth where they can pose as humans.

Chapter 14

Chapter 14 Summary

The three androids speak together briefly, and then start eating Isidore's food. Roy Baty tells them that Polokov, Garland and Luft had been retired. He also mentions that someone retired two other androids earlier in the day. They realize they are the only survivors of the eight androids Rick has been hunting.

Irmgard and Roy explain how Polokov almost killed Dave Holden, and that there is a new bounty hunter. They explain their plan to stay with Stratton and hide in the old building. Isidore begins to sense that they are androids. Roy suggests that Stratton move in with Isidore, and she says she will not live with a chickenhead. Isidore urges her to be careful.

Roy then sets out a plan to set up an alarm system to protect them. They discuss the fact that their fake identities did not work and feel badly for both Luft, who was stuck in the public eye at the opera house. Isidore offers to stay home from work to protect Stratton from the bounty hunter. He then contemplates why the police are not stopping the bounty hunter when he is clearly violating the beliefs of Mercerism.

Roy goes to set up the bugs and alarms, and Isidore has a brief idea that he is an android. Isidore offers once again to help Stratton and her friends, and Stratton heads upstairs with him to move into his apartment. Once there, she tells Isidore that she and the others are crazy and experience group hallucinations. Isidore is relieved to hear that it is all made up, and tells her that he never thought it was true because of Mercer's ideal that all life is sacred.

Roy then shows up and installs an alarm that picks up intelligent minds, which he says will not affect any of them. When triggered, it will immobilize that person with fear. Stratton and Isidore note that this fear will affect Isidore as well, and Roy says that does not matter. Isidore then realizes they are androids, but says it does not matter to him and that he thinks they are actually superior because of their intelligence.

Stratton and Roy then discuss that Isidore does not know how they got off Mars (by killing their human masters). Stratton is sure of Isidore's loyalty, and the other androids say how much they admire him for his compassion. The androids decide to have a vote on their next course of action. The chapter concludes with them agreeing that Isidore is "special" (in a good way, as opposed to society's definition of him).

Chapter 14 Analysis

This chapter is very important because it reveals that the escaped androids have been working together, and that they are Rick's next target. The androids show complete disregard for Isidore, discussing their plans in front of him. They also talk about their

comrades along with how four of them have already been killed. This again shows the cold and analytical side of androids, and shows Isidore's ignorance. This ignorance is particularly highlighted at the end of the chapter when it becomes clear that Isidore is not afraid of the bounty hunter coming.

Stratton's attempt to fool Isidore into believing the three androids are actually delusional mental patients once again shows how duplicitous the Nexus-6 androids really are. Yet for all their intelligence and cunning, the androids end up admiring the "chickenheaded" Isidore for his compassion and loyalty.

Chapter 15

Chapter 15 Summary

The androids begin to vote, with Roy choosing to kill Isidore, and the two females deciding to stay in the building. Stratton thinks having Isidore is an asset, and that the other retired androids were killed because they used their intelligence to arrogantly, believe they could blend in. Isidore feels assured that he could help the androids stay on Earth.

The scene shifts to Rick, who has finished work and headed to an animal dealer. He still feels depressed, but decides that seeing animals will help him. He talks to the salesman, who persuades him that goats are loyal and a good choice because it can resist diseases caused by radioactive materials. They negotiate, and Rick agrees to purchase a goat.

Rick arrives at home and tells Iran about their new animal. Iran is pleased, although she reproaches Rick for having made the decision without her. Rick's neighbor appears once again, compliments Rick and offers to exchange his colt for a "couple of kids." Iran wants to go use the empathy box to "fuse with Mercer" and offer thanks, but Rick has a feeling that the goat must be attended. Iran persuades him, however, and the two head for their apartment while discussing Mercerism.

Iran notes that the people using the empathy box at any one-time exchange feelings, which can be very helpful to people who are depressed or suicidal. Rick notes that while it may cheer those people up, it tends to depress people supplying joy. He then tells Iran that he is starting to sympathize with androids, and that he bought the goat to cheer himself up because he is starting to sympathize with androids (rather than as a present to Iran as he had originally told her). Iran is upset especially when she finds out he wants to take a different job because without bounty money they will have a hard time making payments on their goat.

Bryant then phones and tells Rick that the police have found two of the remaining androids. The androids are reported to be at an abandoned apartment building. Rick tells him he wants to take a break, and Bryant orders him to go anyway. After the two hang up, Rick tries a session on the empathy box. He finds Mercer standing in a desert, and asks for help. Mercer says that he cannot help, and that Rick must live with the fact that his actions are wrong because it is necessary for the good of society. Rick is struck with a rock, leaving the machine to find blood on his ear.

He says goodbye to Iran, and heads for his hovercar. He reflects for a few minutes on whether he can kill three more androids that day, and then calls Rachael Rosen to come and help him. When she says she can come the next day, Rick insists she come right away. She refuses again, and Rick accuses her of trying to get back at him for the

empathy test he administered earlier. He then invites her to stay at a hotel with him, and the two make plans to meet.

Chapter 15 Analysis

The chapter starts with the androids voting to use Isidore rather than kill him. Again, they discuss the matter right in front of him, without any concern for his feelings. What is interesting about their discussion is that they recognize their limitations. They decide that despite superior intelligence, their android comrades on Earth were defeated because they lacked the simple feelings that even a special like Isidore possesses.

Rick's new goat represents many different things, and is one of the single most important symbols in the book. On one level, the goat is an important status symbol, and represents his chance to elevate himself and Iran from their status as electric animal owners. The goat also represents Rick's atonement for his job; by taking care of a living animal, Rick can redeem himself for killing androids. Finally, and ironically, the animal represents a way for him to keep his morale and motivation high; in a somewhat cold-blooded move of his own, Rick buys an expensive animal to motivate himself to keep killing androids so that he can pay for it.

In a sense, Bryant calling Rick back to work destroys the delicate balance Rick has created by buying the goat. He is buoyed, however, by Mercer's assurance that what he does is necessary – and it becomes clear that this is an important message when he has an empathy box experience that is different from any others described in the book. Mercer's words give Rick a kind of moral get-out-of-jail free card and this may help to explain why Rick calls Rachael Rosen and invites her to San Francisco, fully intending to use her both to retire the remaining androids and for sex.

Chapter 16

Chapter 16 Summary

The chapter starts with Rick sitting in a hotel room reading about the androids. He reflects that the androids started out on Mars as laborers, and wonders whether they dream of a better life. He reads about Roy Baty's attempts to create a shared experience for androids similar to Mercerism.

Rachael arrives, and Rick shares the information with her. She alludes to the fact that Rick will have trouble killing Pris Stratton, and then asks for his plan of action. Rick looks at her body and finds her attractive. She then tells him Pris Stratton will look like her, and that she will help him find and retire the remaining group of runaways.

Rick kisses her, and the two discuss the empathy-like identification Rachael has for Stratton. Stratton expresses a fear that she and Stratton will change places and Rick will kill her instead. She tells Rick she was sent to observe him administer his empathy test to see why the Nexus-6 androids fail. They also talk about how the Rosen Corporation is working to defeat every empathy test. Rachael then says she is drunk, and that she will stay in the hotel while Rick goes to hunt Baty and the other androids.

Rachael tells Rick that she does not (and cannot) care about him or Pris Stratton. She proposes they go to bed, and Rick tells her that because of his new goat he has to get back to work. Rick then marvels that Baty is the key to his being able to stay alive. Rachael says that she will stay behind, but Rick says Baty will kill him no matter what he does. Rachael offers him a device that will stun androids for a few seconds. Rick undresses her and Rachael expresses love for him.

Rick says that he cannot sleep with her because Stratton will look like her. Rachael offers to retire Stratton if Rick will sleep with her. They then have sex.

Chapter 16 Analysis

There are two vital occurrences in this chapter. The first is the development of Rachael's feelings of empathy toward the other androids. Despite the fact that it is widely known that androids cannot feel empathy Rachael seems to be very upset about their plans to kill the other androids, even as she says she will help Rick. She tries everything to keep Rick in the hotel room, even to the point of professing her love for him. She finally manages to delay him by promising to kill the Pris Stratton android for him.

The other important occurrence is Rick's constant ogling of her body and assessment of her character. This represents the ultimate blurring of the line between person and machine, and shows just how fascinated he has become with android females.

Chapter 17

Chapter 17 Summary

After their encounter, Rick has coffee while Rachael bathes. Rachael reveals that androids cannot control their "physical, sensual passions," and that androids typically live for about four years. On their way to the suburbs where Baty and the others hid, Rick discusses his goat and tells Rachael he would marry her if he could. He realizes he will have to stop bounty hunting.

Rachael senses this and tells him that no bounty hunter has been able to continue hunting androids after sleeping with her. The only exception, she reveals, was Phil Resch. Rick realizes he has been used, and Rachael reveals her attempts to stop him from chasing the androids. Rick says he can kill Baty but not the women. Rachael than taunts him but professes not to know why the trap of using a female android works almost every time on bounty hunters. She tells Rick that she has slept with eight or nine bounty hunters.

Rick decides to kill her, and says he understands why sleeping with her turned Resch into a cold-blooded killer. Rachael stops struggling and accepts her death as inevitable. Rick finds himself unable to kill her and decides to return her to her car. She compares him to the other bounty hunters, then telling Rick he loves his goat more than he does her or his wife. Rachael then turns on the radio and tells Rick that Buster Friendly will be making an important announcement. When Rick tries to turn the radio off she asserts herself and turns it back on, which is described in the book as a form of victory over Rick.

Chapter 17 Analysis

This chapter reaffirms the deviousness of the Nexus-6 type android, as we learn that Rachael has been setting him up all the time. It also introduces a fascinating parallel between Rick and Rachael. While Rick, the human, hunts androids using cold logic and investigative techniques, Rachael the android hunts human bounty hunters using sexuality. What this means is that the line between humans and machines has been completely obliterated – humans have become android-like in their tenacity, while androids have adopted human characteristics such as ridicule and seduction.

However, as soon as Rick shows his humanity once more by sparing her life, Rachael turns back into an android. She is contemptuous by his lack of courage, and immediately begins to take for granted that she has destroyed his will to go on killing androids.

Chapter 18

Chapter 18 Summary

This chapter starts with Stratton ordering Isidore to bring her television into his apartment. She and Irmgard Baty are excited about Buster Friendly's upcoming announcement. Isidore heads downstairs to Stratton's apartment feeling happy about being useful. He retrieves the television and thinks briefly about how quiet it is without it on, and how he could no longer face living in this empty building after having met his new "friends."

After returning to his own apartment, Isidore is dismissed by the androids, so he returns to Stratton's apartment to gather her clothes. On the way back to his apartment, he captures a spider. Though the other androids are raptly interested in the TV, Stratton examines the spider with some interest. She and Irmgard then proceed to mutilate the spider with scissors, ignoring Isidore's pleas to the contrary.

While this is going on, we hear Buster Friendly on television in the background making it known that that the scenes found in the empathy box are fake, and that the entire experience is faked. He tells the viewers that Wilbur Mercer is actually an actor named Al Jarry who filmed the scenes found in the empathy box several years before. His conclusion is that Mercerism is false, and the "fusion" of minds it gathers is actually an ambitious plot by someone or some organization.

The androids discuss Buster Friendly's announcement while continuing to torment the spider. Isidore is upset, and they mock him for his belief in Mercerism. They decide that Mercerism will experience a decline, and announce that Buster Friendly is an android. Isidore drowns the spider, and the androids realize he was more upset about the spider than the loss of his religion. Isidore then asks Roy if Mercerism is a fake.

Isidore then begins to look at and touch various objects in the room, and they start to turn to "kipple" around him. He starts to have visions of dead animals all around him, and in his mind, he appeals to Mercer for help. He then sees the spider alive once more, and realizes he is having an empathy box experience. He asks Mercer if he is a fake, and Mercer confirms that everything Buster Friendly revealed was true. Mercer says that none of that matters, because he does help people by fusing their thoughts and feelings together. Mercer gives Isidore the spider in its original condition, and the chapter ends with Roy Baty announcing that a bounty hunter is in the building.

Chapter 18 Analysis

Unlike Rachael, these androids are all cold logic and business. They order Isidore to do their bidding without any regard to his feelings, despite the fact that his feelings are the stated reason he has been kept alive. Isidore still feels happy, however, because he is actually with people – satisfying the basic need for companionship.

The spider that Isidore captures represents everything he believes about Mercerism and life in general, quickly becoming a prize that he treasures. It is highly symbolic that one group of androids destroy his spider even as on television another group of androids destroy his religion. His spontaneous bonding with Mercer restores Isidore's faith. The restored spider is also a powerful symbol of the power Mercerism does hold, and of the fact that this religion is something more than just the fake Hollywood scene that Buster Friendly describes.

Chapter 19

Chapter 19 Summary

Isidore realizes he is back in his apartment. Irmgard Baty tells him he has to answer the door and send the bounty hunter away. Isidore goes out in the hall and realizes he has a living spider in his hand and delivers the spider into the garden. The bounty hunter (Rick) catches him and Isidore tells him that Buster Friendly proved that Mercer does not exist. Isidore also tells him that one of the female androids tortured the spider. Isidore refuses to help Rick, and Rick heads into the building alone.

Rick reflects that he has never caught an animal before, wondering if the Rachael look-alike tortured the spider. Rick then encounters a person in the hall who claims to be Mercer. Mercer reassures Rick that retiring the three androids is necessary and tells him that one is approaching. Rick sees Stratton, but at first thinks that she is Rachael. When he realizes his mistake, he kills Stratton, and reflects that Mercer had helped him when he needed help the most.

Rick then proceeds to Isidore's apartment. He knocks and pretends to be Isidore. The Batys open the door and Irmgard insists he has to administer the empathy test. Roy fires a laser at him, and Rick informs them that he does not have to give the test. He kills Irmgard, and apologizes to her before moving into the apartment to chase Roy. He finds Roy crying, and reflects that Roy loved Irmgard and "I loved Rachael. And the special [Isidore] loved the other Rachael [Stratton]." He then kills Roy.

Isidore appears, crying, and tells Rick that he has seen Stratton's body. Rick gets to a phone and calls Bryant.

Chapter 19 Analysis

In this chapter, the androids try once more to use Isidore to protect themselves. Isidore, however, has come to an almost religious decision. To protect the spider while retaining his new android friends, he must release the insect. His choice is made even clearer when he refuses to help Rick find the androids. The merging of the two storylines of the book make it possible for these two animal loving protagonists to meet, and like all good post-war society members they discuss both Mercerism and the value of animals.

Like Isidore in the previous chapter, Rick has a spontaneous Mercerism experience as he enters the apartment building. It is clear from the interaction that Mercerism does exist outside of empathy boxes, and that Mercer, or whoever is behind Mercerism, can tailor specific messages for people when they need him. Mercer's words directly aid Rick, who is forced to kill the Rachael look-alike Stratton.

Once he has done so killing the other two androids is a relatively simple matter for him, especially with Mercer's assurance that his actions are necessary. He is also motivated

by greed, as evidenced by the first feelings he has after realizing he has killed six androids in one day: instead of any sadness, he immediately feels relief that he has a goat and a large amount of bounty money.

Chapter 20

Chapter 20 Summary

Bryant is pleased with Rick's work and tells him to rest. Rick then tells Isidore that androids are stupid, and Isidore tells him that he wants to move out of the building. Isidore's obvious anguish prompts Rick to reflect once more that he has a terrible job because he is required to do wrong.

Rick returns home and learns that Rachael Rosen killed his goat by pushing it off the roof. Rick prepares to leave, and Iran asks him to stay and says that Buster Friendly claims that Mercer is a fake. Rick tells her it is true, and then drives off to the desert feeling sure he will die.

Chapter 20 Analysis

Isidore's reaction to Stratton's death throws Rick into a kind of moral despair, as he sees once again that androids can provoke empathy in humans. Despite Mercer's assurance that his job is necessary, Rick is sure that he has become a bad person. The one thing that keeps him going is the though of returning to his goat and his "normal" life with Iran. Once the goat, with all its symbolic value of redemption and advancement, has been taken away from him he immediately falls into the deepest despair.

Chapter 21

Chapter 21 Summary

As Rick flies over the desert, he thinks about the fact that crops and animals used to flourish in this area. He also ponders his own fame for having killed six Nexus-6 androids in a single day. He lands and tries to call Dave Holden at the hospital. When he is unable to reach him, he sits in the car until he gets cold.

Rick leaves the car and walks through barren landscape. He climbs a hillside, paralleling Mercer's journey up the hill. It becomes warm and he thinks about how he has been defeated and thinks about Rachel, questioning if she is the one who has done so. He almost falls, and then feels a rock hit him in the groin. He keeps climbing until he sees his own shadow and believes it to be Mercer. He panics and returns to his car, takes some snuff, and realizes he is too tired to fly back to town.

He calls the Hall of Justice, and his secretary tells him he will be getting an award and tells him that Iran and Bryant are looking for him. Rick tells her he has become permanently fused with Mercer, and that he has quit the police force. She expresses concern for him, and he says that the death of his goat has hurt him.

The two then talk about Mercer, and Rick claims to have had the "real illusion" that he was Mercer and that people were throwing rocks at him. He says that he is now Mercer, and promises to call Iran. The secretary tells him to go to bed, and Rick thinks about how the last time he was in bed was with Rachael and that his goat would be alive if he had killed her. He wonders what would have happened if he had kept climbing the nearby hill, and is then surprised by something as he is about to call Iran.

Chapter 21 Analysis

The Mercer-like journey that Rick goes on in this chapter is symbolic of his personal journey in the novel from a happy, dedicated android killer to a confused being with a new sense of moral consciousness. The fact that he does not complete his climb to the top of the barren hillside is important, showing that Rick is breaking away from his position in the world's societal structure. His decision to break free is reflected when he tells his secretary that he is quitting his job as a bounty hunter.

What will Rick do next? This is a question he cannot answer, although he wonders whether he will be forced to stay out in the barren landscape and climb the hill endlessly as Mercer does.

Chapter 22

Chapter 22 Summary

Rick puts the phone down and stares at a toad he sees outside his car. He is surprised because although toads were said to be Mercer's favorite animal they have been extinct for years. He finds a box in his trunk and sets out to capture the toad.

We learn that people who find animals believed to be extinct receive an award and a million dollar-plus reward. He then wonders if he has gone crazy and become a chickenhead like Isidore. Rick lifts the toad out of its hole, and it struggles. He puts it in the box and closes the box. He then flies away, headed for San Francisco.

We next see Iran at the mood organ, trying to decide the appropriate mood. Rick arrives and she marvels that although he is dirty from the desert and bloody from rocks thrown at him, he seems happy and enthusiastic. She gets him coffee, and he says he is going to rest. Then he shows her the toad, and tells her how toads have weak legs and can live in the desert. Iran finds that the toad is a fake.

Rick is disappointed, and reflects that Isidore's spider was probably artificial as well. He then reflects that electric animals have lives as well, and deserve to be alive. He tells her that his mission to kill the androids was grueling, and that he was afraid when it was over he would be empty. He says she was right that he was a murderer. She kisses him and says she does not think that anymore.

He tells her that Mercer told him what he did was wrong. She says that the killers that pursued Mercer are a curse on all mankind. Rick goes to sleep on the bed, and Iran watches him to make sure he is resting. She then returns to the toad, and calls a shop to order accessories for it. Her closing thought is to tell the clerk that Rick is "devoted" to the toad and she wants it to "work perfectly."

Chapter 22 Analysis

Rick's discovery of the toad represents the final aspect of his dehumanization. His joy at finding the toad is revitalizes, and seems to come from his total embrace of Mercerism. However, like Mercer himself, the toad proves to be a fake. This is a crushing blow to Rick, who has been "programmed" to believe that all animals are sacred. Any new hope that Rick following his defeat by Rachael seems to have disappeared, and Rick the ardent mood organ fan turns away from any artificial stimulation.

In a very real way, Iran and Rick have changed places from the first chapter to the last. In the beginning, Iran is depressed by the emptiness and despair she sees around her, while Rick is convinced that life has an important purpose: to protect animals and preserve organic life. However, Rick learns that organic life is not the only thing important and that artificial life around him is hardier and is becoming more dominant.

Iran, on the other hand, is somehow reassured that her despair was correct. Iran finds new hope knowing they have another artificial animal in their lives. In addition, like Rachael before her, she may be experiencing a kind of victory over her husband because she has been proven right.

Characters

Bill Barbour

The neighbor in the Deckard's' apartment building who is wealthy enough to own a real live horse. Deckard and Barbour's interaction is mainly one of competition, and provides an interesting commentary on interpersonal relations in their society. When Barbour reveals his horse is pregnant, Deckard asks if he can buy the colt from him. After Barbour refuses, Deckard's desperation leads him to reveal that his sheep is a fake. Barbour can afford to feel sorry for Deckard-"you poor guy,"_ he sympathizes-because he has a live animal, after all. His empathy does not extend to helping Deckard with his problem, however. Only after Deckard brings home a live goat does Barbour consider dealing his future colt to his neighbor.

Irmgard Baty

Wife of Roy, Irmgard is a "small woman, lovely in the manner of [1940s film star] Greta Garbo, with blue eyes and yellow-blonde hair." Of all the fugitive androids, she seems nearest to understanding human attributes-if only from a cold, objective standpoint. She appreciates Isidore's peaches as Pris cannot, and she is able to recognize how Isidore has emotionally accepted them. But while she seems to be sympathetic to Isidore, she cannot comprehend what the spider means to him, and she is the one who suggests they cut off its legs to see what will happen.

Roy Baty

Leader of the renegade android troop, Roy is the android who proposes flight to Earth for the eight "friends." Roy is the most intelligent and most dangerous of the eight illegal androids. Deckard's report tells him how Baty framed the escape attempt within the context of a new religion. The basis of this ideology, says the report, is the "fiction" that android "life" is sacred. Baty attempts to instill an ideology within the group that would somehow mimic human Mercerism. That is, he attempts to fake the very emotional empathy that the eight androids are unable to experience. To further his plan and improve the fakery, he experimented with various drugs.

Despite his efforts, the cooperation of the androids lasts only as long as it takes to make their escape. After that, they break up. In the end, one reason the Batys are the last to be retired is that they understand that they are different from humans. The others, particularly Garland, Polokov, and Luft, tried to masquerade as human, and failed. Roy Baty recognizes that the androids can never duplicate the human sense of empathy, and hopes they will be accepted once Buster Friendly reveals the "truth" behind Mercerism. After the announcement, he proclaims proudly that now everyone will know that "the whole experience of empathy is a swindle." He does not understand, as

Mercer tells Isidore, that the revelations will change nothing because humans *need* to share with each other. Instead, Baty easily falls victim to Deckard's laser tube.

Milt Borogrove

Borogrove is the repairman at the Van Ness "Pet Hospital." He sympathizes with Isidore after he discovers that the wheezing cat he has just picked up from the Pilsens' was real He tries to diffuse the tension between Sloat and Isidore when the former forces Isidore to call the owner and report the cat's death. He has the best manner on the phone and cuts in on the call to help convince Mrs. Pilsen to replace the cat with an electric duplicate.

Harry Bryant

Inspector Harry Bryant, 'jug-eared and redheaded, sloppily dressed but wise-eyed," gives Deckard the assignment Holden could not finish. He is worried about this assignment, particularly by the possibility that the Voigt-Kampff empathy scale may no longer be an accurate method of distinguishing androids from humans. Only after Deckard successfully assesses androids at the Rosen offices does Bryant turn over Holden's notes to assist him in his hunt. Even after Deckard retires three of the androids during one day, Bryant pressures him into resuming the chase that same evening.

Iran Deckard

Wife of Rick, she is the very image of the stereotypical bored housewife. While technology has provided her with a mood machine that enables a toleration of her tedious life, its very artificiality depresses her. This upsets Rick, who, after talking to her during one of her dialed "depressions," thinks that "most androids I've know have more vitality and desire to live than my wife." Rick feels responsible for Iran, however, and so she inspires him to continue on with his job, with the electric sheep, and everything else that seems hopeless. In many ways, she is the only one in the novel to have a practical epiphany. She realizes she loves Rick: when he returns from his assignments, she thinks "I don't need to dial, now; I already have it-if it is Rick." This leads her to cover up the panel on the electric frog and take on its care-she orders some electric flies.

Rick Deckard

The lead character of the novel is having doubts about himself, his professional abilities, and the morality of his job. His doubts are embodied in his relationship with his electric sheep. He is tired of pretending that his electric sheep is real; "owning and maintaining a fraud had a way of gradually demoralizing one:' He is trying to deal with these emotions when he is called on to "retire" six Nexus-6 androids who have escaped to Earth. Although he recognizes that "the empathic gift blurred the boundaries between hunter and victim,"

he is able to rationalize his duty: "A humanoid robot is like any other machine," Deckard tells Rachael Rosen; "it can fluctuate between being a benefit and a hazard very rapidly. As a benefit it's not our problem:' Yet though he tells himself clearly that he is justified in killing killers who have "no ability to feel emphatic joy for another life form's success or grief at its defeat," he begins to have doubts. "This is insane," he says after killing Luba Luft, whose singing could have been a joy to humans.

His experience with Phil Resch creates more doubts. As he later tells Iran, "For the first time, after being with him, I looked at them differently. I mean, in my own way I had been viewing them as he did I've begun to empathize with androids." This only makes his task more difficult, not impossible. To get over his doubt, he takes Resch's advice and sleeps with Rachael. The act does not affect him as Rachael had planned, however. She reveals that she has seduced several other bounty hunters, and all except Phil Resch have been unable to continue killing androids. She believes that Deckard has been rendered harmless as well, for he cannot bring himself to kill her. For Deckard, however, her coldly calculated confession gives him new inspiration. His regret, finally, is that he didn't kill her when he had the chance. If he had, the goat would still be alive.

After he is done retiring androids and discovers his dead goat, he flies off for some time alone. He contemplates the day's events: "What I've done, he thought; that's become alien to me. In fact everything about me has become unnatural; I've become an unnatural self." He has a spiritual experience akin to the Mercer story. He finds himself climbing up a hill as rocks are thrown at him. He thinks he has somehow merged with Mercer. Instead, he gives up on the climb and the toad he finds is a fake. He may now be known as the greatest bounty hunter, but in reality he is just another man, feeling confused and defeated.

Buster Friendly

Buster Friendly is on television and radio practically all the time. Unknown to most of his audience, however, everyone's favorite talk show host is an android. He aims to keep the housewives, and anyone else who watches, entertained and happy. He and Eldon Rosen are at the forefront in the struggle of android's rights. Part of his work involves the unmasking of Mercer as a fraud. The thinking is that if Mercer, who originated the rule that only life is sacred, is a fake, then perhaps his rules can be rewritten. As Isidore recognizes, "Buster Friendly and Mercerism are fighting for control of our psychic souls."

Garland

Garland is an officer in an alternative police force summoned by Luba Luft after Deckard's attempts to question her. His police headquarters is unknown to the real police headquarters, and he similarly professes to have no knowledge of Deckard or his superiors. When he finds his name on Deckard's list, Garland tries to confuse the issue

by claiming that Deckard is the android. When his own bounty hunter, Phil Resch, seems to sup port Deckard, Garland admits to Deckard that they are all part of the escaped android group. Garland's police are attempting to create a safe haven for androids by imitating real police security. Resch becomes convinced of Deckard's story, however, and kills Garland before Garland can kill him.

Dave Holden

The senior bounty hunter in the San Francisco police department is Dave Holden. He has been tracking eight illegal androids recently arrived in the district. He successfully tests and retires two androids before the third injures him. He has notes on the remaining six which are passed on to Rick Deckard.

J. R. Isidore

See John R. Isidore

John R. Isidore

"My name's J. R. Isidore and I work for the well-known animal vet Mr. Hannibal Sloat; you've heard of him. I'm reputable; I have a job. I drive Mr. Sloat's truck." So Isidore would like to believe about himself, and so he wants his newly discovered neighbor, Pris Stratton, to believe about him. In reality, at least in the legal terms of the novel's universe, Isidore is "special" or, in slang, a chicken head. This status is given to those individuals so affected by the radioactive dust that they fail a standard IQ test. Thus labeled, they are given the grunt tasks of earth's remaining society; they cannot emigrate off the planet; they cannot procreate. Isidore is not completely nonfunctional; but he is classified as such and is easily. intimidated by his superiors. "I'm hairy, ugly, dirty, stooped, snaggle-toothed, and grey . I feel sick from the radiation; I think I'm going to die," he protests when Sloat forces him to tell an owner her pet has died.

Nevertheless, Isidore has a highly developed sense of empathy. As Milt Borogrove observes, "To him they're all alive, false animals included." Thus Isidore befriends the renegade android band even after he discovers their secret. He knows they are using him but given his caste-like status as a special, he enjoys the trust and society the androids seem to be giving him. Irmgard recognizes this: "They don't treat him very well either, as he said.... He knows us and he likes us and an emotional acceptance like that-it's everything to him." He vows to be loyal to them and protect Pris from the Bounty Hunter. But when Pris begins to amputate the legs of a spider he found, Isidore is enraged. He rescues the spider and puts it out of its distress.

His hopes seem to die then. Buster Friendly has announced that Mercer is a fraud, and the cruelty of his "friends" bewilders him.

Isidore's tale is similar to Deckard's, however. The humanity that had been sacrificed to his chicken head label begins to assert itself again. Out of his depression comes renewed contact with Mercer, who reassures him that "nothing has changed" and gives him a healed spider. While he reveals the androids' presence to Deckard, he refuses to help him hunt them down. He cries at their deaths, just as bewildered over their executions as he was at the spider's torture. He yearns for society once more and tells Deckard he is moving in to town.

Sandor Kadalyi

See Max Polokov

Luba Luft

Luba Luft is an escaped android trying to pass as a human opera singer. She disturbs Deckard because of the way she handles the test-confusing his reading and insisting on questioning his own humanity. Cleverly, she says he must be an android because he does not care about androids. She is retired by Phil Resch, but not until Deckard proves himself human (and possessing a growing empathy for androids) by granting her last request. He purchases a copy of Munch's *Puberty* for her-something that Phil would be incapable of doing. Her death upsets Deckard greatly, for he wonders why someone with such talent should be considered a liability to society.

Wilbur Mercer

Mercer is the central figure of a religion that is supported by the government. Mercer's legend recalls how he had the gift of reversing time, which he used to bring dead animals back to life until the government stopped him. He was then "plunged into a different world," and began to ascend from the pits of this world onto a mountain, where he is attacked by "Killers." Mercer's followers can join him on this ascent by use of an "empathy machine," which links their consciousness together. They feel his struggle and those of others linked to them, and they also experience the wounds he receives. The sole tenant of Mercerism is empathy for all living things: *You shall kill only the killers,* Mercer announced from the beginning. Just who may be defined as "killers" is left up to the individual, however.

Adhering to Mercerism, or having empathy, clearly marks humans as separate from the constructs they have made. The androids believe that proving Mercerism a fraud will aid them in gaining status as "living" beings. Buster Friendly, in a Wizard of Oz move, does reveal Mercer as a drunken actor named Al Jarry, pretending to climb a mountain on a poorly constructed set. But because the shared experience of Mercerism has relevance for humans, the revelation will not change anything, despite Roy Baty's euphoria. Deckard's final encounters with Mercer, which seem to happen without the use of an empathy box, seem to reinforce this notion.

Mrs. Pilsen

Mrs. Pilsen is the owner of a real cat, and her husband has mistakenly called the Van Ness "Pet Hospital" after it became ill. When Isidore informs her of the cat's death, she is unsure what to do. Ironically, although her husband loved the cat "more than any other cat he ever had," he never got "physically close" to the cat. As a result, Mrs. Pilsen would rather attempt to fool her husband with a mechanical replica than inform him of its death.

Max Polokov

The android who injured Dave Holden, senior bounty hunter, has taken on the identity of a chickenhead garbage collector. Now discovered, he poses as a soviet officer from the WPO coming to help and observe Deckard. Deckard retires him.

Phil Resch

One of the bounty hunters working for the false policeman Garland is Phil Resch. After revealing his own identity, Garland tells Deckard that Resch is an android because he hopes that Deckard will kill Resch-thus making him guilty of murder and putting him out of commission. The problem with Resch, according to Deckard, is that he enjoys killing too much Disturbed by Garland's real identity, Resch starts to wonder if he too might be an android, despite the fact that he loves his pet squirrel. Resch demands that Deckard test him-and he passes. The contrast between Resch and himself leads Deckard to reconsider his line of work.

Resch kills two of the androids on the list but Deckard will take the credit since Resch is now a fraudulent bounty hunter who Just killed his boss. Deckard then confides his doubts about the job. Resch proposes an easy solution which he himself used-sleep with Rachael Deckard follows this advice, but it has different effects on him than he expects.

Eldon Rosen

Eldon Rosen is chairman of the Rosen Association and is Rachael's "uncle." He is nervous about Deckard's pursuit of the escaped eight androids. If the bounty hunter's test is unable to distinguish humans from androids, his corporation will have to cease production of the androids until a replacement test is developed Thus, Deckard, "a little police department employee," is in the incredible position of being able to stop production of all Nexus-6 androids One direct result of this would be a system-wide business failure, because Rosen's output is one of the essential pivots for the working of the economic system. The colonization effort depends on the allure of the settler being given an android. If the androids are not available, colonization ceases. The economic system of the planets would then collapse.

Eldon faces the problem by attempting to call the Voigt- Kampff Test into question. If Deckard is convinced Rachael is a Schizoid girl who grew up on a colonization ship then her positive result on the Voigt- Kampff means that the test is no longer valid. "Your police department,"' Eldon says to Deckard, " ... may have retired, very probably have retired, authentic humans with underdeveloped empathic ability Your position. .. is extremely bad morally. Ours isn't." The manufacturing of androids is an essential component of systemic operation. If retiring androids is suspect due to the inherent risk Eldon sites, then it may be done away with. Eldon can then buy Deckard's allegiance and continue to perfect his androids and dominate the market. Still not quite convinced, Deckard is offered a bribe Fortunately, he comes up with one more question when he hears Rachael repeatedly refer to the Rosens' owl as "it," and proves she is an android. The Voigt-Kampff test still works and production can continue-but so can the retiring of escaped androids.

Rachael Rosen

Rachael Rosen is a Nexus-6 android made available to Deckard by the manufacturers to see if the police tests will work on this new model. Although his test indicates she is an android, the Rosens claim she is human. Deckard is not sure, but a final question solves his dilemma and proves her origin. This near misidentification causes him to begin feeling empathy for the nearly human androids. The doubt this causes him leads him to take Rachael up on her offer to help him catch the remaining fugitives. This leads the two into bed, and Rachael confesses that she loves him and will give him an instrument to render the fugitive androids helpless. Rick begins to wonder if he might love her in return. He considers that she only has two years of life remaining-androids live for four years because technology has failed to master cell replacement. However, the revelation that her agenda is to curtail bounty hunting efforts causes him to reject her. She takes revenge by murdering his Nubian goat.

Hannibal Sloat

The famous (in Isidore's mind) Hannibal Sloat owns a fake animal repair shop called the Vanness Pet Hospital "-that carefully misnamed little enterprise which barely existed in the tough, competitive field of false-animal repair." Sloat is too old to emigrate and, therefore, is "doomed to creep out his remaining life on Earth." Though he has a fully functioning brain, he is as susceptible to the radioactive dust as anyone else. He sight is obscured-but he never cleans his glasses anyway and his other senses are also deteriorating. Still, he is not a special and though he likes Isidore he is not above making himself feel better at his employee's expense.

Sloat's greatest fear is that one day a real animal will be picked up by mistake and brought to the shop. Isidore, innocently, makes this mistake and they have a dead cat on their hands. Remarkably, Isidore handles it-though he is helped by Milt-and tenders them an order for a replacement as well as a new confidential customer in Mrs. Pilsen.

Pris Stratton

Pris hides out in what she thinks is an abandoned apartment building in the suburbs. But it is Isidore's building. He senses another person in the building and comes to make friends. She accepts him grudgingly, even though he senses there is something strange and cold about her: "it was not what she did or said but what she did *not* do and say." Although she treats Isidore disdainfully, calling him a "chicken head," she does cast the deciding vote to remain with him in his apartment, rather than kill him, as Roy Baty suggests.

Pris is the same Nexus-6 model as Rachael Rosen-in fact, that is the first name she gives Isidore, until she figures out it might give away her android origin. Deckard believes that he will be unable to kill Pris because of her resemblance to Rachael. Following Resch's advice of having sex with Rachael has not helped. He worries that he might be in love with Rachael. But he realizes it was an infatuation, that she was deceiving him. He further realizes that Rachael is a type of machine and Pris is another version, just slightly different. Disgusted by the idea of "legions" of Rachaels, he retires Pris with no difficulty.

Themes

Science and Technology

One of the goals of Dick's fiction is to show that the idea of technology as passive helpmate, slave, or fantastic mistress is unrealistic. Similarly, the opposite notion-that humanity can somehow return to a pastoral way of life and live in an agriculturally based paradise-is naive. These two beliefs, according to Dick, actually endanger the evolution of humankind: so long as humans are uneasy about their own tools, or regard them as in some way mysterious, those tools will be seen as having some innate power over mankind. In other words, regardless of technology's fallibility, if humans regard themselves as less smart or less able than their tools, then they will be at the mercy of their tools. Technology will advance, regardless of what the majority of humanity feels about that technology. Any struggle to remain the ruler or owner of new technology will surely fail. Dick believes the only solution to human uneasiness with technology is a wholesale acceptance of it.

Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep? expresses Dick's ideas about technology in ways very similar to the story of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein.* That creature, animated from lifeless flesh, was its creator's scientific success. But the good doctor was so horrified by his creature's grotesque appearance that he ended up destroying it. In Dick's version, the trouble with scientifically created androids is that they resemble their masters too closely. Yet that is what the market has created and that is "what the colonists wanted," says Eldon Rosen. "If our firm hadn't made these progressively more human types, other firms in the field would have." So the problem is not whether androids can approximate humans, but continuing the classification of androids as non-life. It becomes harder to justify the slavery and "retiring" of androids if there is little difference between them and humans. As Isidore tries to teach the group of illegal androids, all life is sacred: all of it, even spiders-whose lack of empathy at one point is compared to the androids' lack. The question then becomes, why can't androids and technology, in all its glorious animation, be defined as a type of life and, therefore, sacred?

Human Condition

Throughout the novel, humans are defined as constructs capable of empathy and "empathetic, role-taking ability." Human empathy is what the Voigt-Kampff test looks for; whether the test subject responds to a described situation as if it were real for them. Even without the test, humans reveal themselves through their need for other living creatures and their being needed in return. "You have to be with other people... In order to live at all," says Isidore. To be human, to be alive, is to depend on other people. Pris, Roy, and Irmgard have accomplished this to some extent, and they decide to accept Isidore. That is all he needs as verification that though "not alive" and illegal, the three are people. Through the ability of the three androids to work as a team and Isidore's

acceptance of them, Deck leaves open the possibility of a harmonious future. At present, however, the definition of human is constantly challenged and then reconfirmed by human relations with androids-humans remain humans by eliminating the almost human. Dick is reflecting on man's inhumanity to man by putting humans in the position of defending their identity through the elimination of their imitators. It is a tense condition, and similar to the tension between the chicken head and his employer, which is full of anger and resentment. The laws separating "human" from "special" from "android" are parallel to the Jim Crow laws in America, Apartheid in South Africa, or ethnic cleansing.

Phil Resch is an example of an exception to this general theory of the human condition as put forth in the novel. (One can make a similar case for Iran, who, until the very end, is absorbed only with her own individual problems.) Resch is a human who shows concern for Deckard, and he takes good care of his real squirrel. Yet his callous disregard for his android victims leads Deckard to doubt his humanity. Resch feels that artificial constructs have no value. He dehumanizes them, similar to the way that the Nazis viewed Jews during the Holocaust. Such a breakdown of empathy in one area of an individual's psyche enables violence. The question then becomes, why single out androids as the ones to be retired? How do you confine the exertion of violence to illegal androids? This worries everyone, especially if the Voigt-Kampff test is no longer valid. What if some schizophrenics are not locked up and one is retired by mistake? What happens when Sloat really goes after Isidore? Deckard comes to realize that humanity can and must extend itself to empathy toward artificial constructs. For the environment, it is the only way to return the owls to the skies.

In terms of Deckard's personal growth, he has realized that his interaction with his Electric Sheep is wearing down his self-respect. Every day he pretends to care for an object as if it were real. He feels oppressed by his need to keep up the appearance that he owns a real animal. "The tyranny of an object... [is that] it doesn't know I exist. Like the androids, It had no ability to appreciate the existence of another." That is why Deckard needs a real animal, so that something not only knows he exists, but needs him in return. Gradually, he finds empathy for artificial life and is even prepared to accept the toad. But, ultimately, peace comes to Deckard as his wife fulfills the role of making him feel needed.

American Dream

The "American Dream" is often defined as the freedom to pursue material success, as symbolized by owning one's own home in a cozy suburb. In a perverse rendering of the suburban dream, Dick presents a society where a home on a space colony is the goal of most people. In his vision, the healthy people of earth are exported to other planets and given a slave robot to work their own homestead. (Ironically, the term "robot" comes from a Czech play about a nobleman who replaces his serfs with manlike machines.) On Earth, home of those not intelligent or healthy enough to emigrate, the dream of most people is to own a real animal. The darker side of this suburban reality is that the wife stays securely at home. She, like her 1950s counterpart, spends her time watching

television. In Dick's view of the future, she has a machine for dialing up moods. There is even a number to dial for the mood to watch television-and Dick does not envision the programming getting better. Fantastically, Iran can even dial up her own depression. To ward off loneliness, she can bond with unhappy people everywhere through an empathy machine. These perverse twists on the "American Dream" present a view of suburbia as an inherently alienating society that speeds the decay of human community.

Morals and Morality

Decades ahead of his time, Dick foresaw the moral issues which would develop from a capitalist, technological society. In the world of *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?,* good moral codes are those which support the economic system and keep people happy. Mercerism teaches people an empathy that is coincidentally profitable; every living being is sacred because of the nuclear war, therefore, the ownership of a living animal marks status. Caring for a living creature is important for Mercerists, but ironically, this responsibility is also market driven. Similarly, Eldon Rosen has no need to consider whether it is ethical to create androids that are indistinguishable from humans, because he is just producing what the customers want. "We followed the time-honored principle underlying every commercial venture,"_ he tells Deckard. "If our firm hadn't made these progressively more human types, other firms in the field would have." Eldon Rosen claims his moral standing is better than the dubious position of the police and their faulty empathy test. The system's security rests on whether the bounty hunter is able to verify and destroy illegal androids-but the growth of the same system rests on whether the Rosen Association can produce androids so lifelike as to make the bounty hunter's job impossible. When the Rosens succeed, industry will take over the job of natural evolution; industry will put perfect animals back in the wild and gradually make a perfect human/android race. But everyone will be happy for there will be no bounty hunters to fret over identity questions.

Style

Narrative/Point of View

Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep? is narrated in third person, with the characters described as "he" or "she." The narrator is reliable, but is not omniscient ("all-knowing"). Unless a character speaks his thoughts, they remain unknown. The narrator limits the point of view to the characters of Rick Deckard and J. R. Isidore, with a brief exception for Iran at the end of the novel. The narrator knows the world of this future society well enough to explain Isidore's condition, as well the importance of the Rosen Association. The narrator is not perfect, however, and at times the reader has to Just go along with the story. For example, the narrator portrays Deckard's job as very difficult, particularly the challenge posed by the new Nexus6 androids. Nevertheless, he finds it rather easy to retire Pris, and the "worst" android, Roy, is no problem either. The appearance of Mercer to assist Deckard with Pris is a clumsy type of "deus ex machina" (literally, "god out of a machine"), in which the gratuitous assistance of an outside force saves the hero.

Science Fiction

The most fundamental requirement of this genre is that it make use of science in some way. Secondly, and perhaps as important, this genre is concerned with the impact of real or imagined science upon an individual or society. Beyond those two principles, the genre is quite open to every thing from the most fantastic (e.g. "Star Wars" or *Dune)* to the most pedestrian (e.g "Honey, I Shrunk the Kids").

Another frequent, but not necessary, component of science fiction is social criticism. Science fiction inherits this trait from earlier writers, who satirized their own time by displacing and exaggerating their society as a real society somewhere else. Perhaps the most famous version with some remaining currency is Jonathan's Swift's *Gulliver's Travels.* Were Swift writing two hundred years later, it is easy to see that Gulliver's boat would have been a space ship. In other words, storytellers often have an easier time pointing out foibles and complaining about their own times by placing them to a fantasy world or to other worlds entirely.

Dick is obviously a science fiction writer because he employs hovercrafts, space colonies, androids, lasers, sine wave disrupters, and so on. He also uses the familiar science fiction formula of a post-nuclear holocaust Earth. The idea of Earth after an all-out war is an old one, but the intricacies of possible survival after a nuclear war has offered much cause for speculation Dick wants the reader to believe life would continue, although society would have to impose caste-like marks on its people for the good of the whole. Further, evolution would depend on the further development of biotechnologies and the acceptance of its byproducts as real.

Detective Story

Detective stones first began with Edgar Allan Poe's "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" (1841) and became a mature genre with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes mysteries. Normally, a detective story presents a crime that the inspector has to solve. *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* is a detective story with a twist. A crime (murder) has been committed by the androids, and Deckard is assigned to track them down and "retire" them in turn, as dictated by the law. As the novel progresses, however, Deckard comes to question the morality of carrying out the law. The test used to determine the android's death sentence eliminates that android's right to be a productive being. She may fail the test, but Luba Luft was capable of enjoying and participating in a very human activity-art.

From the start, the reader knows who the unlawful constructs are and it is readily apparent that the purveyor of justice is Rick Deckard, bounty hunter. But this is not a usual assignment. These androids are working together and in league with their manufacturers to win acknowledgment that these new constructs merit legal standing. Deckard's Job becomes a potentially immoral act, by unmasking them as escapees and then denying them their rights. In fact, he doesn't even test the most progressive androids because they attack him first. So Deckard solves the "case," but not the problem of whether the androids were advanced enough to warrant a change in their legal standing.

Anti-hero

An anti-hero is a protagonist of a narrative distinctly lacking in heroic qualities. That is, he does not possess outstanding courage, strength, or morals; frequently he is an outsider who has difficulty accepting conventional values. Rick Deckard is an average sort of man who does not have exception skills or strength. He is only a backup bounty hunter, and he has an unsatisfied wife, an electric sheep, and a great deal of doubt about whether he is fit for his profession. Yet all these failings enable the reader to identify with him, root for him, and sympathize with his predicament. In addition, Deckard's doubts about his work, in contrast to Phil Resch's callous manner, highlight an empathy which approaches the heroic Nevertheless, Deckard's "heroic" final confrontation with Roy Baty-which ought to be the book's climax is described as a rather boring action. A true hero would be rewarded with his greatest dream, but in the end Deckard's goat is dead and the toad he discovers is false. He also thinks he has merged with Mercer; instead, it is an illusion brought on by exhaustion. By portraying Deckard's achievements and rewards as less than heroic, Dick seems to suggest that perhaps this is the best anyone can do in such anti-heroic times.

Historical Context

The Cold War and Vietnam

Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep? portrays a world that has survived a nuclear holocaust, a possibility that did not seem too far-fetched in the 1960s. Since the end of World War II, when the United States dropped two atomic bombs on Japan, the Soviet Union had been developing their own nuclear arsenal. Many Americans saw the spread of Soviet Communism as the country's greatest threat, and they engaged the Soviets in a "Cold War" throughout the 1950s and 1960s. The two sides never directly engaged each other in combat, although they came close in 1962, when the U.S. challenged the Soviets over their placement of missiles in Cuba. By the late 1960s, both sides bad enough nuclear missiles to destroy each other-and the entire world-several times over. The Cuban Missile Crisis, however, had shown both sides that a nuclear confrontation was something to be avoided at all costs: the only thing that it could achieve was Mutual Assured Destruction. By 1968, U.S.-Soviet relations had warmed to the point where several treaties had been signed, including a 1967 treaty that prohibited the military use of space. Pessimists, however, still worried that total nuclear destruction could come with just one press of a button.

America's involvement in the Vietnam War, although involving no nuclear weapons, was another front of the Cold War against communism. The United States had been providing military advisors to the government of South Vietnam since the 1950s. The South Vietnamese were struggling against communist insurgents, and the U.S. feared that if Vietnam fell to the communists, the rest of Southeast Asia would follow. By 1968, U.S. military involvement bad grown to include over half a million American troops in Vietnam. Nevertheless, the war effort was not particularly successful in driving out the communists. The Tet offensive by the North Vietnamese began at the end of January, 1968, surprising the South Vietnamese and their U.S. allies. These events further embarrassed the U.S., and the war grew more unpopular as people doubted whether it was winnable. In March of that year, although it would be unknown to the American public for twenty months. American soldiers committed what has come to be known as the My Lai massacre. Searching for enemy soldiers, U.S. troops entered a village and rounded up hundreds of inhabitants-men, women, children, old and young-and shot them all.

A World of Political Unrest

As U.S. involvement in Vietnam escalated, so did public opposition to it. People questioned both the effectiveness and the morality of sending American soldiers to fight in another country's civil war. Thousands of Americans, particularly students, protested the war, sometimes clashing with police. The 1968 presidential election provided many opportunities for such confrontations. In August, the Democratic Party convention was held in Chicago, and antiwar protesters found it the perfect forum for expressing their

opposition. Some ten thousand protesters responded to calls from antiwar activists David Dellinger, Rennie Davis, and Thomas E. Hayden and radical "Yippies" Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin. Determined to maintain order, Chicago mayor Richard J. Daley called up 16,000 city police officers, 4,000 state police, and 4,000 National Guardsmen armed with tear gas, grenades, night sticks, and firearms. The police clubbed and gassed demonstrators and observes alike in attempting to prevent the demonstrators from marching, giving speeches, and sleeping overnight in the city's parks. The "Chicago Seven"-including Dellinger, Davis, Hayden, Hoffman, Rubin, and Black Panther Leader Bobby Seale-were convicted of violating a federal anti-riot law during a boisterous trial, but later had their convictions overturned.

The late 1960s were a time of conflict, confusion, and moral uncertainty, and demonstrations were not limited to antiwar causes or even America. People all over the world peaceably demonstrated for a better world. 1968 was a particularly violent year worldwide, as the efforts of leaders to motivate people for equal rights, justice, and peace began to payoff. Thousands of people were on the streets marching. From San Francisco to Mexico City, Chicago to Memphis, and all the way to France and Czechoslovakia, people were demonstrating for peace, change, and a better life. People were beginning to protest the inequitable distribution of wealth and governments were answering with force. Thus there is a particular irony in a statement by Dick's character J. R. Isidore, who will not believe that bounty hunters exist, "B-b-because things like that don't happen. The g-g-government never kills anyone, for any crime."

In April of 1968, several months after FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover's order to shut down "Black Nationalist hate-Groups," civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee. Racial rioting broke out nationwide as a result, and Chicago's Mayor Daley gave a "shoot to kill" order in that city to stop the rioters. Nationwide, 46 died and 21,270 were arrested Columbia University students shut down their campus to protest gymnasium construction because it eliminated affordable housing in the area; they were stormed by police and 628 people were arrested. In France, student protests led to a revolution in the University system, events which continue to be discussed in French academia. Meanwhile, the Soviets thwarted a revolution in

Czechoslovakia with an occupation army of 650,000 and a system of censorship. In the fall of 1968, Mexico City police fired on student demonstrators in Tlatelolco Square. Officials reported forty dead; other observers put the figure at seven hundred.

The Growth of Environmentalism

In the 1960s, people became more aware of the environment and the need to protect it. Rachel Carson had published her groundbreaking work *Silent Spring* in 1962, alerting Americans to the potential dangers of industrial contamination of the environment. This work motivated environmentally concerned Americans to create the Environmental Defense Fund, which lobbied for the creation of a federal agency to protect America's environment. Although the Environmental Protection Agency was not created until 1970,

Congress still took action on many environmental issues in 1968. They approved two new national parks: North Cascades National Park set aside 505,000 acres, while Redwood National Park contained 58,000 acres along forty miles of the Pacific Coast and included the world's tallest tree. The Congress also issued a report in 1968 which officially declared Lake Erie, one of the five Great Lakes, dead from the effects of pollution. Similarly discouraging reports emerged in that same year. Enzyme detergents made by several companies were reported to create problems in American water and sewage systems. The Coast Guard reported 714 major oil spills for the year, almost double the number from previous years. Not surprisingly, fish kills (a term normally associated with spring thaw, when pollutants are most concentrated) are estimated to have increased to fifteen million fish. Many people warned of coming environmental disaster, similar to the one portrayed in Dick's novel.

Medicine and Health in the 1960s

In *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?,* a class of physically and mentally inferior humans develops as a result of nuclear fallout. In the world of 1968, a similar subclass of humans seemed to be in the making, as the result of inequitable resource distribution. Many people, especially children, were suffering from inadequate nutrition, despite huge increases in food production levels worldwide. For example, India's food minister, Chidambara Subramaniam, estimated that in his nation between 35 and 40 percent of children had suffered brain damage because of a lack of protein in their diets. In the United States, nutrition investigator Arnold E. Schaefer was appalled at the vitamin A deficiency which he discovered in certain schools. This led him to comment that the low-income children he studied might go blind "five minutes from now or a year from now." Meanwhile, a Citizens Board discovered that federal food aid programs only reached 18 percent of the nation's poor.

Medical advances, on the other hand, seemed to promise longer and healthier lives for humanity. In late 1967, the first successful human heart transplant was performed by Dr Christiaan Barnard in Cape Town, South Africa. Dr. Denton A. Cooley echoed this success in the United States a few months later. This development increased the anxious discussion about organ replacement and the sanctity of the human body. It also made juicy fodder for science fiction writers, who specialized in androids, cybernetic prostheses, and the loss of identity which comes with the mechanization of the body.

Critical Overview

The first problem with assessing the critical reputation of *Do Androids Dream of Sheep?* is distinguishing the novel from the film it inspired, 1982's *Blade Runner.* There are film reviews, there are book reviews, and there are reviews which confuse the two; anything written before the movie's release in 1982 is probably a safe bet, however. Therefore, before engaging with the criticism of the novel in any form, be sure that the critic is discussing the novel by checking its title and its references to the plot line. Reviews of the novel alone are few, and there are many that confuse it with the film. Telling signs of this confusion are references to Rachael (varying last names) as love interest and Patricia S. Warrick, however, is delighted with Dick's narrative for the development of its form as well as its philosophy. Her article in the 1983 anthology *Philip K. Dick* traces the development of Dick's notion of the android as a way to embody human foibles. In this way, Dick is not unlike the early novelists John Bunyan (author of *Pilgrim's Progress,* 1678) or Henry Fielding (author of *Tom Jones,* 1749). For Warrick, the android motif expresses the idea that due to pursuit of money or some other fetish, people have become mechanical. They are "humans who have lost their humanness [like Resch] and become mere mechanical constructs unable to respond with creativity and feeling." But Warrick, despite her love of Dick's narrative process, cannot resist an answer to the title question, *Do Androids dream of Electric Sheep?:* "Yes, as each form contains within itself the shadow image of the potential forms that seed its inevitable transformation, so do androids dream."

Criticism

- Critical Essay #1
- Critical Essay #2
- Critical Essay #3

Critical Essay #1

David J. Kelly is *an English instructor at several colleges in Illinois, as well as a novelist and playwright. In the following essay, he compares* Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep? *to* Blade Runner, *the popular movie that was adapted from it.*

It is awkward to tell friends that you are reading *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* The title is long and complex, and besides, few people outside of the small, particular community of science fiction fans are familiar with it. Much easier is to tell friends that you are reading the book that *Blade Runner* is based on. Why not? The publisher even uses this shorter title on the paperback reissue editions, remembering to include Philip Dick's original title only in parentheses. The 1982 movie *Blade Runner* was a critical success upon its release, and its reputation has grown since then. Special effects technicians point to this movie as a turning point in cinematic design. The Library of Congress has listed it with the "culturally, historically or aesthetically significant" films on the National Film Registry. Fifteen years after the movie's release, a video game based on it has become a best seller, introducing a new generation to the *Blade Runner* idea.

The problem is that the *Blade Runner* idea is not the same thing as the complex examination of humanity's goals and weaknesses found in *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* The film does have its virtues, but, as is almost always the case with cinematic adaptations, the book is better.

The emphasis of the movie can be found in its title, which uses a phrase for bounty hunters that never appears in the novel. The words "blade" and "runner" suggest weapons, action, fighting, hunting, and, by extension, survival. Rick Deckard is played by Harrison Ford as a familiar movie type, a man of few words, the lonesome, weary private eye slogging through the filth and hopelessness of a corrupt society. Rather than taking place in a deserted San Francisco, the film moves the action to jam-packed Los Angeles, where the street scenes are dominated by twin influences of advertising and Asian design: aspects of today' s Los Angeles projected to an extreme. This setting keeps the viewers' eyes busy and realistically projects the social changes that Southern California is expected to undergo in the decades to come. It has less to do with Dick's novel, though, than with the detective movies of the 1940s and 1950s that spun off of Raymond Chandler's fiction. In the film version Deckard struggles against the dehumanizing effect of the corrupt culture that he lives in, which actually is a different thing than the book-Deckard's struggle to retain his humanity. Only his growing respect for android life is presented in the film, dramatized by Rachael Rosen's simplified role as a traditional love interest and by Roy Baty's touching sacrifice of his own life at the end.

While the film is able to insinuate the ways in which humans and androids are similar (very convincingly, since the androids in the film are played by humans), it is unable to come near the book's intricate understanding of the many ways we humans relate to the world around us. Focusing our concentration on hunting and killing the androids invites the viewer to think of them as objects, to focus on the ways that they deserve to be found and destroyed, and this draws viewers away from the empathy that is at the core

of *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* and that is found throughout most of Philip K. Dick's works.

The quasi-religion Mercerism, based on empathy with the struggles of Wilbur Mercer, is just too complex to convey to a motion picture audience with sounds and images. Introduced in Dick's 1964 short story "The Little Black Box," Mercerism is a well-conceived religion for modern times, offering a touch of the spiritualism that has been pushed aside by technology throughout the twentieth century. Dick shrewdly gave Mercerism the structure that a post-apocalyptic society will require only slightly more than our own: its focus is away from moral laws and toward unity, but it achieves unity, as our society increasingly does, via the shared experience of an image on a screen. Mercerism is a believable practice in the novel because it represents the struggle against the forces that try to isolate us from each other. So convincing is it at fulfilling a human desire that readers tend to empathize with Deckard and ignore the evidence that Mercer is a fraud, a character played by an old drunkard, and to accept Mercer as being more real than ever when he mysteriously, supernaturally, appears to Deckard.

Unfortunately, the only way to include the practice of Mercerism in the movie would be to waste precious screen seconds showing Deckard, Iran, or Isidore staring at a video tube. Dick did suggest a cinematic quality to Mercerism by having the empathy that is felt by its practitioners show up as physical bruises and welts, which is at least a step closer to the visual language of film than simple emotional bonding would be. In a quieter film, it would give viewers chills to see a character on screen who is so entwined with a distant figure that their empathy could draw blood, but *Blade Runner* is too active, too predatory, to slow down for this kind of abstract point.

The fact that this movie has no way to include animals in its futuristic scenario represents a true loss. In the novel, Deckard's electric sheep, his goat, and the toad that he finds in his moment of despair at the end all are important. They indicate how individuals in this society relate to those they come in contact with, and to society in general.

The electric sheep helps define just how badly people in Deckard's world long for something to care for, to look after and love. The mention of lead codpieces in the first chapter indicates that radiation has made people in this society sterile, unable to bear the children that might otherwise be the objects of their affection. Deckard's electric sheep also functions to give readers a sense of his humanity by showing him as a failed, vulnerable human being: not the chisel-jawed tough guy of the film but a poor schnook, looking at his neighbor's horse with envy.

When Deckard buys his goat, his good fortune is as balanced as it is for real humans struggling in modern society. The fact that he can at last afford a live animal is a mark of his growing success, but the fact that he feels a need to immediately squander his windfall, that he has to get an animal *right away,* indicates a desperate, slightly pathetic need for something warm and alive. A goat is not the most lovable of creatures-as the android Rachael notes, "Goats smell terrible"-but that is what the shop had available at the time, and Deckard is so in need that he appreciates what he can get. The goat is

also significant because, while representing Deckard's attempt to forget society's faults by establishing a one-to-one relationship with an animal, it also traps him in a job that he has come to despise: his mortgage on the goat ensures that he will have to work for years to pay it off. At the end of the film *Blade Runner,* Deckard escapes with Rachael Rosen to a new, happy life, but the novel's Deckard stays true to his responsibilities

In the end of the novel, after all of his struggles, his raised and shattered hopes, it all comes down to the toad that Deckard finds. This final touch is so important to the story that one of Dick's earlier titles was "The Electric Toad," to give readers a hint at what really matters. In the final chapters, Deckard finds a life form that is supposed to be extinct, raising his hopes not Just for the future of toads, but for life on this planet He finds out that it is fake, indicating that reality is slipping away, becoming irrelevant in his world. After he has gone to sleep, Iran makes provisions to care for Deckard's toad, indicating that whether a thing is real or unreal is irrelevant; it is caring about it that counts. Compared with this web of despair and hope, the film's ultimate point that Deckard can love a beautiful android as if she were human seems crass and primitive.

Other animals are mentioned in the story, and although they are not as prominent, they help the reader reline a sense of what Deckard's world is like. In the first chapter he recalls a sheep he once owned that Iran's father had left to the Deckards upon emigrating to Mars. From this little fact we gain a perspective on how valuable real animals are, that a policeman's salary would not be able to buy one on the open market. The film gives no such realistic detail. Later, when the owl owned by the Rosen Association is introduced, readers have some idea of how phenomenally expensive such a rare animal must be: we understand the magnitude of Rosens' power, and of the bribe Deckard is offered and rejects. The cat that dies while J. R. Isidore is taking it to the hospital informs readers of Isidore's inability to distinguish real from imitation, a particular manifestation of his radiation-induced weakness that becomes significant in his later dealings with Pris and the Batys. Though Isidore accepts the androids as being enough like himself for friendship and maybe even love, he does realize, when Irmgard mutilates the spider-an insect that most of the novel's readers would destroy Without a second thought-what the difference between a false human and a true human is.

The omissions made when translating this novel for the screen may thin out the story's substance, but it would be wrong to imply that this is one of those cases where the author had to suffer the indignity of watching his work watered down. Philip K. Dick suggested most of these changes. In 1968 he wrote notes on different ways the novel could be handled as a film script. Some of his suggestions seem quaint from a perspective of modern time-Gregory Peck seemed to him a good choice to play Deckard, and his idea of a good contemporary film script shows an obsession With the newly released film *The Graduate,* which was indeed cutting-edge artistry in its time but seems raw and clumsy compared to the film that became *Blade Runner.* Dick's main concern for the film was that it raise the question of what reality is, which might be why he related it to a coming-of-age movie like *The Graduate.* He was quite willing to sacrifice much of the novel. "We can have a many-sided film ..." he wrote, "or, I would think, some of the moods (and plot, etc.) can be eliminated entirely, however important they are to the novel" His notes specifically recommend keeping "the search and

destroy androids theme" and the sexual relationship between Deckard and Rachael, which, probably not by coincidence, would have been the elements to most interest prospective movie makers. Dick was still a fairly obscure and underpaid science fiction writer when he prepared these notes, and he may well have been simply doing what he could to sell the screen rights and make a buck, but there can be no question about whether Hollywood surprised him by changing his story. The filmmakers probably were not following his directions, but the simplification they did in 1982 ended up following the changes he anticipated in 1968.

Source: David J. Kelly, in an essay for *Novels for Students,* Gale, 1999

Critical Essay #2

In the following excerpt, Wheale examines "the conflict between 'authentic' and 'artificial' personality".

It really is time to take science fiction seriously. The genre now forms about ten per cent of paperback fiction sales, and with the continuing success of comics such as *2000 AD* and graphic novel fiction such as *Watchmen* there's every reason to think that the readership will continue to grow Literary syllabuses in schools and colleges have traditionally been slow to catch on to the study of contemporary forms of popular narrative, whether they are soaps, pulp romances, detective novels, or science fiction. But the growing number of self-constructed course work options does offer the possibility of bringing new kinds of contemporary writing and reading-experience onto the syllabus. I want to suggest some ways of approaching the writing of one of the most celebrated SF authors, Philip K. Dick, through a discussion of his novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968) and its acclaimed film realisation as Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* (1982). I concentrate on the central theme of both novel and film: the conflict between 'authentic' and 'artificial' personality, that is between people and robots....

A common reason often given for not paying attention to science fiction is the supposed lack of 'human interest' in the genre: technology dominates to the exclusion of developed personalities or relationships. Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream?* is a special case for this kind of objection because it explicitly plays with confusions between human personality and artificial or machine-derived intelligence: what *would* be the difference between a physically perfect android kitted out with memories and emotions passably like our own, and a person nurtured through the usual channels? The question can stimulate good discussion: name as many robots as you can think of; do we believe artificial intelligence will ever equal human resources; and if all robots look like the Ford automated-assembly line then why are we even beginning to take the idea of androids seriously?

One answer to the last question is that in all periods 'human-Things' have been imagined as entities which test or define the contemporary sense of human value: the incubus or succubus in Christian tradition, the Golem in Jewish folklore, Prospero's Ariel and Caliban (and perhaps even Miranda too?), E. T. A. Hoffmann's Sandman, and of course Mary Shelley's Frankenstein. Philip K. Dick's androids are no exception, they belong to their period, the late 1960s, in the way that they are defined in relation to authentic human emotionality and sanity. But as soon as we have written the glib phrase, we are brought up short, in exactly the manner which the novel provokes: what is an authentic human psyche?

Do Androids Dream? is set in the decaying megalopolis of Los Angeles, AD 2020, a post-holocaust society where the human population has been decimated by the effects of radiation sickness. So far, so conventional; the scenario is one major cliche of pulp SF. This novel's originality is created by the compelling logic to be found in the details of

the North Californian world which it evokes. The effects of 'World War Terminus' have induced progressive species death, beginning with birds, then 'foxes one morning, badgers the next, until people had stopped reading the perpetual animal obits.' This species-scarcity induces a kind of religion of animal-ownership in the surviving human population, where everyone aspires to possess and care for one of the beast creation. Curating animals is also partly a replacement for child-rearing, because the fear of genetic damage has discouraged human reproduction. The bounty-hunter hero of the novel, Rick Deckard, keeps a black-faced Suffolk ewe on the roof of the apartment block where he lives With his wife Iran. But the sheep is not ideal, in fact it's electric; Deckard can't afford a real one, and he continually checks the list-price of animals in 'his creased, much-studied copy of Sidney' s Animal & Fowl Catalogue.'

At the verge of its extinction, the natural world becomes a valuable commodity; the process of collecting and buying the living merchandise itself accelerates the destruction, increasing scarcity, raising prices. Here the often-praised predictive aspect of good science fiction is very evident. But the keeping of animals in the future world of the novel is an element of a larger belief system: everyone views their own life as part of 'the Ascent', a progress up an increasingly steep incline which they share with the god-like figure of Wilbur Mercer. This religious empathy, or feeling-with, is generated and experienced through technology. By tuning in to an 'empathy box' each individual shares in the Ascent of Mercer, and shares the antagonism directed to their god-figure by some unknown enemies, 'the old antagonists': 'He had crossed over in the usual perplexing fashion; physical merging-accompanied by mental and spiritual identification... As it did for everyone who at this moment clutched the handles, either here on Earth or on one of the colony planets.'

'Empathy' joins believers with Mercer, either through use of the black box, or through the empathy which they extend towards the animals they keep or, more rarely, to other individuals. And at the centre of the novel's increasingly tortured attempts to locate absolute differences between androids and human beings, we find the linked ideas of *empathy* and *affect. The Oxford English Dictionary* defines 'empathy' as 'The power of entering into the experience of or understanding objects or emotions outside ourselves.' It is a relatively recent word in English, first recorded by the *OED* in 1912, and imported from the vocabulary of German philosophical aesthetics. Through empathy we know and feel what it is that other people know and feel; it is an experience of (literal) fellow-feeling. 'Compassion' is the medieval word used to designate this sort of emotion (from 1340), and 'sympathy' the Renaissance term (1596).

'Affect' is a much older word that has taken on a new lease of life again in the early twentieth century. It is first recorded by the *OED* from about 1400, conveying a group of related meanings: 'Inward disposition, feeling, as contrasted with external manifestation or action; intent, intention, earnest' , and 'Feeling towards or in favour of; kind feeling, affection'. So even in the medieval period 'affect' was already a word with psychological resonances, and it is used for this reason in our own period by Freudian psychoanalysts to describe emotional value within the psyche. *Do Androids Dream?* employs this idea of 'affect' to distinguish between a 'person-Thing' and a human entity: humanity experiences affect (and affect-ion), robots don't. But again there is a problem: some

people suffer from a 'flattening of affect', and in the test situation could be mistaken for robots, on this criterion.

The androids of AD 2020 are organic beings-soft robots-designed by scientific-industrial corporations for use on the planetary colonies to which people from earth are emigrating because of all pervasive radioactive contamination-'The saying currently blabbed by posters, TV ads, and government junk mail, ran' "Emigrate or degenerate! The choice is yours !"' The robots act as slaves for the off-earth colonies where they labour or work as servants. They are modeled as mature individuals who never age but, tragically, they only have a shelf-life of four years: this also gives them a certain desperation. Periodically androids run wild in the colonies and return to earth, hoping not to be recognised.

Because they don't possess empathy, the androids represent a potential threat to the human population; they are physically powerful but completely lacking in conscience, moral sense, guilt, and human sympathy: 'Now that her initial fear had diminished, something else had begun to emerge from her. Something more strange. And, he thought, deplorable. A coldness. Like, he thought, a breath from the vacuum between inhabited worlds, in fact from nowhere ' The androids are,

potentially, manufactured psychotic killers. And it is only by identifying them through their lack of empathetic response that they can be located and destroyed. Rick Deckard is a bounty hunter, a twenty-first-century version of Raymond Chandler's Philip Marlowe; he traces androids which illegally return to earth, administers the empathy test, and 'retires' them with a laser gun

This sounds like a no-nonsense kind of job, but Deckard becomes more and more anguished as the boundaries between android response and human response are systematically blurred by the action of the novel. Deckard administers the Voigt-Kampff Empathy Test to suspect androids; this consists of a series of questions which stimulate minute but measurable reflex responses in the subject being tested. The questions are framed to provoke emotional reaction in the 'suspect', the logic being that there is an innate, automatic response within the human psyche which is triggered by particularly emotive descriptions. Ironically, many of the Voigt-Kampff questions describe cruelties which we presently accept as routine, and which presumably would not unduly trouble many people today: lobsters boiled alive, bull-fighting, hunting trophies. In AD 2020 these are crimes against animals which universally horrify humanity, and supposedly leave androids unaffected. But the latest generation of *Nexus-6* 'andys' approaches nearer and nearer to human empathetic ability, and these robots cause Deckard particular difficulty.

The first *Nexus-6* which (who?) Deckard meets is Rachael Rosen, and she very nearly passes the empathy-test ordeal; more difficult still, she ceases to be an inanimate object for Deckard, because he finds himself attracted to 'her' Rachael also turns the tables on Deckard, accusing him of being *in* human because of the instrumental, cold way in which he tries to deal with her. But Deckard does not destroy her, because she is 'the property' of the corporation that made her, 'used as a sales device for prospective

emigrant.' Luba Luft is the next person-Thing whom Deckard has to hunt and destroy, and who has become a fine opera singer 'The Rosen Association built her well, he had to admit. And again he perceived himself "sub specie aeternitatis", the form-destroyer called forth by what he heard and saw here. Perhaps the better she functions, the better a singer she is, the more I am needed.' Luba Luft is a cultured andy: Deckard finds her at an exhibition of Edvard Munch's work, and as a last request before being 'retired' she asks Deckard to buy her a reproduction of Munch's painting *Puberty* (Why this painting? Is it because it represents a developmental stage which the android never had, and wishes to experience?) He spends $25.00 on a book containing the print, and after he has destroyed Luft, 'systematically burned into blurred ash the book of pictures which he had just a few minutes ago bought Luba'. Who exactly is exhibiting android behaviour in this situation? 'Luba Luft had seemed genuinely alive; it had not worn the aspect of a simulation.' . . .

The debates which this novel stimulates by creating 'artificial' people who are effectively indistinguishable from 'authentic' people reproduce in fictional form some elaborate arguments from philosophy. For example, I've taken the phrase 'person-Thing' from Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time,* an influential but now increasingly controversial work, written in Germany during the 1920s. Heidegger's subsequent relations with Hitler and National Socialism cast a long shadow across his philosophical work, but *Being and Time* remains a unique contribution to many questions. What is the quality of our knowledge of other people? How should we avoid treating other people instrumentally, exactly as person-Things? What kinds of criticism can be made of empathy, as a means of understanding others? Are we condemned to treat the world only as an object, and so progressively degrade it?..

Blade Runner radically simplifies the plot-line and 'metaphysics' of *Do Androids Dream?,* but constructs a different logic through visual coding, as all films do. This emphasis on appearance can be said to intensify one of the problems of science fiction as a genre, and this has to do With the representation of gender. Is science fiction inescapably a genre written by men, for boys/men? The loving attention paid to technology, and the flattened portrayal of human character, particularly women's roles, might indicate as much. Authors such as Ursula Le Guin and Doris Lessing have taken up the genre with the explicit intention of creating new kinds of SF narrative and value. *Do Androids Dream?* and *Blade Runner* are not tender-hearted works, they display the routine brutalities and masculinist attitudes of the popular genres to which they owe so many of their conventions. (e.g. *Do Androids Dream?,* p. 145: 'He began hunting through the purse. Like a human woman, Rachael had every class of object conceivable filched and hidden away in her purse; he found himself rooting interminably.') Rick Deckard's infatuation with Rachael is the most troubling instance of this problem. In the novel, bounty hunter and android sleep together, prior to the final shoot-out with the remaining three Nexus-6 robots. Rachael articulates the dilemma: 'You're not going to bed with a woman ... Remember, though: don't think about it, just do it. Don't pause and be philosophical, because from a philosophical standpoint it's dreary. For us both.'

That the problem is 'philosophically dreary' is a drole way of putting it, and this goes some way to rescuing the situation. But not all the way. *Blade Runner* opts for a softer

option. The closing sequence shows Deckard and Rachael flying at speed to the good green country in the north, and Deckard reveals that Rachael has no 'termination date'. He has an ageless companion for the duration. Is this also tacky? Or is it a Witty rewriting of the Greek myth of the dawn goddess Eos and her mortal lover Tithonus? Eos begged Zeus to grant Tithonus immortality, but forgot also to ask for perpetual youth on his behalf.

Source: Nigel Wheale, "Recognising a 'human-Thing' cyborgs, robots and replicants in Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* and Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner,"* Critical Survey, Vol. 3, No.3, 1991, pp. 297-304.

Critical Essay #3

Gwaltney outlines the issues of humanity, personhood, and the ideological problems technology creates in Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?

Both the movie *Blade Runner* and the book *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* are centrally concerned about the definition of humanness in the context of modern technology. The irony present in both works is that through its technology, humanity has diminished its own capacity to survive, necessitating the invention and mass production of a new life form (the android) which is capable of challenging humanity. This situation gives rise to the central dilemma of both movie and book if the creature is virtually identical in kind to the creator, should not the creature have virtually all the same rights and privileges as the creator? (The theological theme here is obvious, but I leave others to deal with it.)

Thinking about the moral status of androids gives us a test case, a model, that we are emotionally removed from, for thinking about the moral status of different stages of human life and the relationship of those stages to each other. Reflection on the moral status of the android helps us to think more dispassionately about just what qualities of human life are required for the presence of personhood. In thinking about these qualities and when they are acquired or lost in relation to the android, we are not confused by the images of, for example, infants and the feelings that attend such images. It is not the purpose of this paper to resolve difficult and inflammatory moral issues such as, for example, abortion and euthanasia; its purpose is merely to point out how reflection on the androids presented in *Blade Runner* and *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* might facilitate resolution of such issues.

The action in both works centers on the progressive feeling of moral wrongness that the protagonist has in "retiring" androids. The more Deckard gets to know them, the less he is able to distinguish between androids and human persons. Rachael is the "clincher" for him in the film. When he first meets her, she does not know that she is an android. It is difficult not to think of Rachael as a person and to sympathize with her as she goes through one of the most painful of human experiences: an identity crisis. In Rachael's case the crisis involves the discovery that she is an android, thus raising the question for herself of her humanity and her personhood. In the novel, Deckard's colleague Phil Resch goes through an identity crisis that is even more poignant given that he is in the business of "retiring" androids. Deckard can ask himself the question "If Rachael and Resch are not human, what am I?'

In the movie, Roy Batty develops into a sympathetic character. Our understanding of his cruelty changes as we come to understand it as a very human reaction to his existential situation: the imminence of his death and that of those he loves; the feeling of betrayal by the beings that brought him into existence.

Roy Batty and his friends are hunted and killed as non-persons, as though they were rabid dogs. The only "official" problem is that the hunters, even after long acquaintance

with the androids, cannot tell if the androids are persons or not, except by a clumsy test of questionable validity. However, the moral problem perceived by the protagonist broadens this to the question of whether the androids are indeed the moral equivalent of rabid dogs or defective equipment, in which there is no issue of moral or legal rights and no question of restraint in the use of deadly force.

Generally it is accepted that only persons or collectives of persons have legal and moral rights Examples of collectives of persons would include corporations (which are legal persons), families, churches, schools, social clubs and perhaps friendships. It is difficult to ascribe a "right to live" to any collective. But persons cannot justifiably be pursued and killed without due process no matter what hideous crimes they are accused of committing. The book and the movie both raise the question of what it means to be a person and thus to be protected by rights.

To be a person certainly means not to be merely a thing or object. That is, a person is a different kind of thing than stones, tables, or cars are. I am only appealing to ordinary experience when referring to these differences but it may not be possible to avoid metaphysical assumptions altogether, because the notion of personhood takes us to the heart of one of the most difficult philosophical problems: the nature of the self.

Under most circumstances the terms "a human being" (i.e., a particular individual human), "person," and "self' can be used interchangeably because they are denotatively synonymous. But that synonymity does not necessarily hold if androids like those in the film and the novel exist. Since these androids are biologically human, even if they are not sexually reproduced, they must be considered human beings in the sense of being *homo sapiens.* When we think of androids as beings "crafted" from human tissue to have human form and functions, we would not assume that such a being is necessarily a person or "has" a self. We would want such a being to meet certain functional criteria before being declared to be a person or to have a self.

The android is in the same theoretical position as the fetus in the abortion debate. Is being live, growing human tissue sufficient for being considered a person with all the protection of a moral and legal society? Human cancer cells growing in a petrie dish are not persons; neither are cloned human thyroid cells. No moral dilemma arises if we throw them into the garbage when they turn "bad" or we have no more use for them. But if the cells in the petrie dish are a human zygote, we may have moral qualms about discarding them or ever having started them.

The reason for these qualms is presumably that a zygote is a potentially "complete" human being and thus a potential person. The androids are presumably assemblies of cloned cells. We are not given any clues about either the techniques or the principles whereby assembly takes place, integrating; specialized cells from diverse sources into a single functioning organism. We can assume that it must be the reverse of the cell differentiation by which the zygote becomes an embryo, a cluster of identical cells differentiating into many specialized cells functioning together. If we decide that the end of these two processes, human cell differentiation and human specialized cell integration, results in beings with the same moral status, then why should not the

beginnings have the same moral status? That is, human zygotes and cloned human cells would have comparable value However, this is *not* to say that the human zygote has the same moral value as a human infant nor that the clusters of cloned cells have the same moral value as the android.

If we can imagine that it is morally permissible to throwaway cloned cells intended for inclusion in an android and if we have decided that androids are the moral equivalent of persons, then we should be able to imagine that it is morally permissible to throwaway zygotes and perhaps even embryos.

The androids are clearly human beings, but are they persons? Do they have "selves"? We cannot answer that question until we decide what a self is, and what it means to be a person. This brings us to the philosophical problem of the nature of the self, which has a very long history....

The qualities usually associated with personhood are rationality and self-consciousness. Persons are able to give purposes to themselves and to act on those purposes. The androids must have these qualities if they are to fulfill the functions for which they are needed: to take the place of "conventional" humans in situations in Which there are not enough humans or which are dangerous or distasteful to humans. To act in such situations, the androids must be able to think like human beings, not like today's computers with all possible decisions programmed but as self-regulating, self-correcting beings. In the language of moral philosophy, they must be able to act autonomously

Computers may be thought to act rationally, in the sense of acting logically, but they do not act to any purpose of their own, only to the purposes of others To act with purpose requires consciousness of self. It means having an awareness of being an identity over time, an identity that can act to achieve a variety of ends or goals, and that, furthermore, can *choose* among that variety of goals.

The androids are portrayed as having these qualities in a variety of ways in both book and movie. Rachael, of course, exhibits the greatest sense of self and the greatest freedom of choice in both texts. In the book, the other androids are portrayed as acting in much the way any group of hunted persons forced to go underground might act; in the movie, they are portrayed as somewhat "unfinished" persons as suggested by striking moments of Child-like or animal-like behavior, with the drama of emerging self-consciousness focused on Roy Batty. The drama of the movie really derives from Batty asserting his freedom by asserting his right to a meaningful length of life not only for himself, but for those he loves.

The androids are clearly persons, but with the exception of Rachael, all are felt to be somewhat defective, not quite right. The book locates the defect in the lack of empathy; the movie more cogently locates the defect in the lack of maturity or developmental experiences which remain with us through memory. Rachael was "given" memories and treated like a natural human person, which accounts for her sense of personhood and our "reading" her as a real or normal person. Leon clinging to his photographs

symbolizes his awareness of his self as enduring through time; the photos remind him of that duration, Le., his own identity.

The androids are an interesting thought experiment: what kind of person would you produce if you eliminated the unproductive periods of infancy, childhood and adolescence, and produced a fully grown adult from the start. It might be a tempting scientific and commercial goal, or even a survival goal if faced with a drastic drop in human fertility. Society invests much of its energy in economically unproductive persons. Non-adults in industrial societies are economically non-productive. Why not find ways to reproduce the species that produce useful adults in a shorter period of time? What kind of being would one have? One with all the intellectual, emotional, and physical capacities of an adult human being but with no experience in learning how to use those capacities. Such a being would, of course, be potentially self-reflective, and would, in a relatively short period of time, become aware of the absence of useful necessary knowledge and experience, just as the human child does. Imagine the frustrated rage of a child expressed in the body of an adult! The android in *Blade Runner* is such a being. No one expects a toddler to have empathy. He is too socially inexperienced. Neither does one expect a toddler to have control over murderous emotions. But as the child grows in experience, she gains in empathy and self-control.

Perhaps personhood is developmental and children and androids are in the process of becoming persons, depending on their degree of experience. Children, however, can be "comforted" in the knowledge that their immaturity is natural, i.e., it is not within the power of anyone except themselves to change it, over the course of a fairly long period of time. The androids do not have such comfort: they know they were manufactured, and thus someone could have made them different from what they are or need not have made them at all. *And* they do not have very much time in which to perfect themselves as persons The android lives just long enough to become aware of his potentiality as a person before he dies. Both his immaturity and his retirement are determined by others. The genius of the movie, as opposed to the book, is that it makes us feel the pain Roy Batty feels when faced With the knowledge of his approaching death in conjunction with his consciousness of his potentiality for knowledge and accomplishment. We are aware with him of all the valuable things he will never know or do. This is the same pain we feel when confronted with the death of a child or adolescent: it is a profound sense of loss of potentiality.

While death itself may not always be an evil, the suffering that attends death is, and the suffering that attends the death of a child is an undoubtable evil. There is something evil about manufacturing or in *any* way producing a being who will become conscious of his early death. It would not be surprising if such a being developed a warped and dangerous personality.

A dilemma appears to be present with respect to who is morally responsible for the murders the androids commit, the manufacturers or the androids themselves. We generally hold the manufacturers of products responsible for their products' defects. However the androids are not mechanical objects, but possess "wills" of their own. To the degree to which androids are persons, to that degree we would say they are morally

responsible for their actions. Even so, we might say that they are persons suffering from diminished responsibility: anyone created to exist under the circumstances which obtain in the androids case would almost certainly go mad upon becoming fully conscious of the situation. Thus the manufacturers of the androids are morally responsible for the deaths caused by the androids. In any case, to kill an android as the blade runner does is clearly murder. As persons, the androids should be entitled to the same moral and legal rights as a "normal" human being of comparable maturity.

Well, one might say, androids of this sort might be theoretically possible, but who would want to bother? Natural reproduction will always be a cheaper, surer and more satisfactory way of increasing human capacities in the universe. If human fertility drops so low as to make such androids desirable, the question "why bother?" is even more relevant. So what kind of light does all the heat in *Blade Runner* generate? I think it is, at least in part, a parable about the morally responsible use of SC1entific creativity. The misuses of the discoveries of SC1ence led to the need for the androids in the first place. The scientific processes and products used to create the androids resulted in conscious beings of the sort that are clearly persons, and persons demand moral cons1deration.

One of the newest frontiers of science is the realm of consciousness. Science is exploring the physical basis for consciousness, ways of manipulating consciousness, exploring similarities between human and non-human consciousness. But consciousness is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition for personhood, and it is to personhood that we attach moral rights and responsib1lities.

Regardless of whether we conceive of personhood as something spiritual or something rooted in the natural world, we mean by the concept of "person" something which should lead us to constrain our behavior. That is, we feel obligations in the presence of persons. We feel that at least we should not kill or even cause unnecessary pain to persons. Most of us would say we also should not lie to or steal from another person, and that, in general, we should accord every person the same rights that we expect to have extended to us in so far as that person can exercise that right.

Immanuel Kant taught that we should always treat persons as ends in themselves and never as means only. In other words, it is morally wrong to use persons as *mere* means; we must always treat them as having intrins1c value. In Western capitalist culture we are accustomed to believing that the creator or discoverer of something is its owner and thus has the authority to use it or dispose of it. *Blade Runner* and *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* carry that belief to its logical conclusion in the context not only of the modern world but of the future

This belief that ownership gives an absolute right of disposal of and authority over the owned has defined the relationships of father and child, husband and wife, master and slave in the past; in our tunes we have denied tills belief in relation to those kinds of persons.

The belief that we have the right to use and d1spose of what we own in any way we like, and that we own whatever we make, is still lurking to trap us in a morally untenable

situation, because we still have not adequately reflected upon what it means to be a person nor appropriately extended the status of personhood. The abortion rights debate is really over whether personhood can appropriately be extended to fetuses. *Blade Runner* prompts us to wonder if the concept should not be extended beyond *the conventional* human and even to the non-human.

Science fiction has long operated on the premise that personhood cannot be confined to the human species, because sc1ence fiction writers have long understood that intelligence is to be respected wherever it is found. Intelligent beings, of course, are the rational, self-conscious, purposive beings we have described as persons.

But extending personhood to the non-human or the unconventionally human is no longer an activity that should be confined to the art of the SC1ence fiction writer; 1t must be seriously contemplated by scientists and lay persons in respect to any endeavor dealing with consciousness. If chimpanzees, gorillas, dolphins, whales, etc., meet the criteria of personness to the same degree as some humans, why should they not be extended the same moral and legal rights? Or conversely, if we deny such moral and legal rights to highly intelligent an1mals, why should we not deny them to some types of humans? Both questions have far reaching implications for the way we V1ew ourselves and how we engage in much scientific and commercial enterprise. Animal behaviorists and medical researchers using animals must consider whether their subjects might meet the criteria for personhood. If they think they might meet those criteria, then they must either stop their research or proceed as though they were dealing with human subjects. Medical scientists and the public must consider the implications for personhood of their life-saving, life-altering or live-creating technology.

Adaptations

The novel was adapted to film as *Blade Runner* in 1982. Directed by Ridley Scott, the movie starred Harrison Ford as retired bounty hunter, or Blade Runner, Rick Deckard, called back for a final job. The film is true to the feel but different from the plot of the original novel-in this version, the hero gets the girl. The film has become a phenomenal cult classic.

Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep? was made into an Audio Cassette Cassettes edition in August of 1994 by Time Warner Audio Books.

Topics for Further Study

Do some research into the pieces of art and music mentioned in the novel. What is the significance of the paintings of Edvard Munch or Mozart's *The Magic Flute* to the themes or plot of the novel?

Based on the evidence provided by the novel, what moral distinctions do you think can be made between life and simulated-life? Make sure to cite examples from the text.

Pretend you are a Martian colonist or an Earth native in Dick's world. Write an essay arguing for or against the abolition of androids.

Consider the depiction of sexuality and sex roles in the novel: compare Rachael to Pris or Iran or Irmgard. Argue whether Dick is misogynist (a woman-hater) or exaggerating inequality to make an effective commentary. Consider the idea of having sex with the enemy-and then killing "her"? What does this say about our society, about violence, about sexual attitudes?

Draw parallels between *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep* and other abolitionist novels. Imagine the speech of Shylock in Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* ("If you prick us, do we not bleed?") as spoken by an android. Or make direct comparisons with the civil rights movement of the 1960s and discuss how Dick was reflecting on the secondary status of blacks in America in the 1960s. Or compare Dick's bounty hunter to portrayals of southern fugitive slave trackers of the antebellum period.

Compare and Contrast

1968: The Americans are caught in a space race with the Soviets to reach the moon. Many predict moon colonies and interplanetary travel.

Late 1990s: The Americans and the Russians are working together on an international space station. There is talk about returning to the moon because ice crystals were discovered at the lunar poles. A return to the moon, some hope, will be a first step to the colonization of Mars.

1968: The Pacific Rim economies are humming. Japan leads the way by passing West Germany to become second to the United States in terms of Gross Domestic Product.

Late 1990s: The Pacific Rim is in financial crisis, if not collapse. Japanese financial companies are frantically warding off bankruptcy after having overextended themselves over the previous decade. The "Asian Contagion" sets off fears of a worldwide financial crisis.

1968: Amphibians seem fine although increasing numbers of fish are dying from the effects of industrial pollution.

Late 1990s: Amphibians are disappearing at an alarming rate. Whether high altitude frogs or desert toads, amphibians are showing up deformed and dead in record numbers The causes are many: increases in ultraviolet light, fungal attacks, polluted water, or new predators. Meanwhile, "fish kills" now describe commonplace occurrences where miles of streams become depopulated due to accidental or intentional chemical dumping. Fish are also threatened by over-fishing, so that the North Sea is "fished out."

1968: Reproductive rights become a hotter topic when the British legalize abortion and Pope Paul VI condemns any artificial means of birth control in his encyclical *Humanae Vitae.*

Late 1990s: Reproductive rights are still a hot issue, but the cloning of a Scottish sheep named "Dolly" has raised the level of debate. Bans have been imposed on human cloning but renegade scientists promise it will only be a matter of time. Clones, not androids, threaten some people's notion of human grace.

What Do I Read Next?

Dick presents some insight into his fictional cosmology in his essay "Man, Android, and Machine," published in the anthology *Science Fiction at Large* (1976), edited by Peter Nicholls. There he describes the complexity of a dream universe wherein there are beings aware of man's plight but offering no help. There are also entities existing outside the dreams of humans which are helping.

Dick's Hugo Award-winning novel *The Man in the High Castle* (1962) explores notions of authority and political oligarchy by supposing that the United States had lost World War II. Japan and Germany divide the U.S. and Dick shows how easily Americans adopt their respective rulers.

Perhaps the best insight into the very enigmatic figure that was Philip K. Dick is the one offered by Paul Williams, close friend and literary executor. Using his access to all of Dick's papers and tapes as well as his own experience with his friend, Williams' portrait of Dick, *Only Apparently Real: The World of Philip K. Dick* (1997), is a must read for any fan.

Scientific and technological progress has always been accompanied by the fear that a creation or discovery would somehow turn on its creator-an idea as old as Adam. But this story was not classically defined (in English) until Mary Shelley won a contest, amongst vacationing friends in Switzerland, with her story, *Frankenstein; or The Modern Prometheus* (1818). Since then, *Frankenstein* has become a byword for any Situation in which a created being (android, computer, or clone) turns on its master. A fictional rule has hence arisen that such a thankless being must be, in Dickian terminology, retired.

Arthur C. Clarke, though he is very dissimilar, was a contemporary with Dick. Clarke is honored as having given a great deal of respectability to Science Fiction as a genre. One of his great contributions was *2001: A Space Odyssey* (also 1968) which grew out of a short story, "The Sentinel" (1951). In terms of computer fiction, this story's main computer, the HAL 9000, has best merited the "Frankenstein" label.

The science fiction giant Isaac Asimov first set forth the laws of robotics in his story collection *I, Robot* (1950). There he creates the archetype of the helpful robot to which Dick reacts. Most notable in the basic programming of Asimov's machines are the laws of robotics. The foremost of these is that a robot cannot harm a human.

An early Isaac Asimov novel, *The Caves of Steel* (1954), deals with many of the same issues confronting Rick Deckard. In Asimov' s crime story, detective Lije Baley is a New York cop who must swallow his hatred for robots when an android is assigned to help him investigate the murder of a colonialist on earth.

A Philosophical Investigation, by Philip Kerr (1992), is in many ways very close to Dick's work. Instead of testing out androids and retiring them, Jake Jakowicz works for Scotland Yard in a world where a small minority of men are "VMN-negatives"-they lack a

certain brain structure and are, therefore, unable to control their murderous impulses. In this world, the testing is for this condition, not for being an android. In Kerr's story, somebody is using the confidential test results as a list of victims and Jakowicz must stop the killer of the killers.

Another huge cult, known as cyberpunks, took their inspiration from the novels of William Gibson. Beginning with *Neuromancer* (1984), Gibson places the struggle for universal dominance not over planets or systems but information. His world of high intrigue depends to a large extent on virtual reality and cyberspace as the site of action. Thus, rather than killing real androids, space cowboys must infiltrate security systems or kill other virtual characters. In a similar fashion to Dick's detective's test-giving ability, the fate of the universe depends on the cowboy's ability to hack into a secure system and retrieve information.

Further Study

Philip K. Dick, "Notes on *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep ?* (1968)," in *The Shifting Realities of Philip K Dick,* Pantheon Books, 1995, pp. 155-161.

These are the ideas Dick had early after the book was published regarding how to adapt it for a movie.

Kenneth M. Ford, Clark Glymour, and Patrick J. Hayes, editors, *Android Epistemology,* MIT Press, 1995.

A good introduction to the state of android technology today and where It is headed.

Carl Freedman, "Towards a Theory of Paranoia. The science fiction of Philip K Dick," in *Science-Fiction Studies,* Volume 11, No.1, March, 1984, pp. 15-22.

This scholarly work looks at characters from several of Dick's novels, including *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?,* to put together a theory of the human condition that is constant throughout Dick's works.

John Huntington, "Philip K. Dick: Authenticity and Insincerity," in *Science Fiction Studies,* Volume 15, No.2, July, 1988, pp. 152-60.

One of the central questions in Dick's works, certainly one of the central questions explored in *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?,* is what constitutes reality? Huntington surveys Dick's works and at least examines the question, although the answer is still left open.

Hazel Pierce, "Philip K Dick's Political Dreams,'" in *Philip K. Dick,* edited by Martin Harry Greenberg and Joseph D. Olander, Taplinger Publishing Co., 1983, pp. 105-135.

This essay, notable in a good collection of essays about the author, examines the reasons readers like or dislike Dick.

Lawrence Sutin, *Divine Invasion A Life of Philip K Dick,* Harmony Books, 1989.

A biography of the author that gives real-life sources that inspired characters and events from the novel.

Patricia S. Warrick, *Mind in Motion' The Fiction of Philip K. Dick,* Southern Illinois University Press, 1987.

This source examines the morality present in Dick's works, especially his special use of the concept of "empathy."

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Robert Scholes and Enc S. Rabkin, *Science Fiction History, Science, Vision,* Oxford University Press, 1977, pp 7175, 180.

Philip Strick, "The Age of the Replicant," in *Sight & Sound,* Vol 5, No 3, Summer, 1982, pp. 168-172.

Angus Taylor, *Philip K Dick and the Umbrella of Light,* T-K Graphics, 1975, p. 52.

Patricia S Warrick, "The Labyrinthian Process of the Artificial: Philip K. Dick's Androids and Mechanical Constructs," in *Philip K Dick,* edited by Joseph D Olander and Martin Harry Greenberg, Taplinger Publishing Company, 1983, pp. 189-214.

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Introduction

Purpose of the Book

The purpose of Novels for Students (NfS) is to provide readers with a guide to understanding, enjoying, and studying novels by giving them easy access to information about the work. Part of Gale's□For Students□ Literature line, NfS is specifically designed to meet the curricular needs of high school and undergraduate college students and their teachers, as well as the interests of general readers and researchers considering specific novels. While each volume contains entries on □classic□ novels

frequently studied in classrooms, there are also entries containing hard-to-find information on contemporary novels, including works by multicultural, international, and women novelists.

The information covered in each entry includes an introduction to the novel and the novel's author; a plot summary, to help readers unravel and understand the events in a novel; descriptions of important characters, including explanation of a given character's role in the novel as well as discussion about that character's relationship to other characters in the novel; analysis of important themes in the novel; and an explanation of important literary techniques and movements as they are demonstrated in the novel.

In addition to this material, which helps the readers analyze the novel itself, students are also provided with important information on the literary and historical background informing each work. This includes a historical context essay, a box comparing the time or place the novel was written to modern Western culture, a critical overview essay, and excerpts from critical essays on the novel. A unique feature of NfS is a specially commissioned critical essay on each novel, targeted toward the student reader.

To further aid the student in studying and enjoying each novel, information on media adaptations is provided, as well as reading suggestions for works of fiction and nonfiction on similar themes and topics. Classroom aids include ideas for research papers and lists of critical sources that provide additional material on the novel.

Selection Criteria

The titles for each volume of NfS were selected by surveying numerous sources on teaching literature and analyzing course curricula for various school districts. Some of the sources surveyed included: literature anthologies; Reading Lists for College-Bound Students: The Books Most Recommended by America's Top Colleges; textbooks on teaching the novel; a College Board survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; a National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; the NCTE's Teaching Literature in High School: The Novel;and the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) list of best books for young adults of the past twenty-five years. Input was also solicited from our advisory board, as well as educators from various areas. From these discussions, it was determined that each volume should have a mix of □classic□ novels (those works commonly taught in literature classes) and contemporary novels for which information is often hard to find. Because of the interest in expanding the canon of literature, an emphasis was also placed on including works by international, multicultural, and women authors. Our advisory board members□educational professionals□ helped pare down the list for each volume. If a work was not selected for the present volume, it was often noted as a possibility for a future volume. As always, the editor welcomes suggestions for titles to be included in future volumes.

How Each Entry Is Organized

Each entry, or chapter, in NfS focuses on one novel. Each entry heading lists the full name of the novel, the author's name, and the date of the novel's publication. The following elements are contained in each entry:

- Introduction: a brief overview of the novel which provides information about its first appearance, its literary standing, any controversies surrounding the work, and major conflicts or themes within the work.
- Author Biography: this section includes basic facts about the author's life, and focuses on events and times in the author's life that inspired the novel in question.
- Plot Summary: a factual description of the major events in the novel. Lengthy summaries are broken down with subheads.
- Characters: an alphabetical listing of major characters in the novel. Each character name is followed by a brief to an extensive description of the character's role in the novel, as well as discussion of the character's actions, relationships, and possible motivation. Characters are listed alphabetically by last name. If a character is unnamed□for instance, the narrator in Invisible Man-the character is listed as □The Narrator□ and alphabetized as □Narrator.□ If a character's first name is the only one given, the name will appear alphabetically by that name. □ Variant names are also included for each character. Thus, the full name □Jean Louise Finch□ would head the listing for the narrator of To Kill a Mockingbird, but listed in a separate cross-reference would be the nickname □Scout Finch.□
- Themes: a thorough overview of how the major topics, themes, and issues are addressed within the novel. Each theme discussed appears in a separate subhead, and is easily accessed through the boldface entries in the Subject/Theme Index.
- Style: this section addresses important style elements of the novel, such as setting, point of view, and narration; important literary devices used, such as imagery, foreshadowing, symbolism; and, if applicable, genres to which the work might have belonged, such as Gothicism or Romanticism. Literary terms are explained within the entry, but can also be found in the Glossary.
- Historical Context: This section outlines the social, political, and cultural climate in which the author lived and the novel was created. This section may include descriptions of related historical events, pertinent aspects of daily life in the culture, and the artistic and literary sensibilities of the time in which the work was written. If the novel is a historical work, information regarding the time in which the novel is set is also included. Each section is broken down with helpful subheads.
- Critical Overview: this section provides background on the critical reputation of the novel, including bannings or any other public controversies surrounding the work. For older works, this section includes a history of how the novel was first received and how perceptions of it may have changed over the years; for more recent novels, direct quotes from early reviews may also be included.
- Criticism: an essay commissioned by NfS which specifically deals with the novel and is written specifically for the student audience, as well as excerpts from previously published criticism on the work (if available).

- Sources: an alphabetical list of critical material quoted in the entry, with full bibliographical information.
- Further Reading: an alphabetical list of other critical sources which may prove useful for the student. Includes full bibliographical information and a brief annotation.

In addition, each entry contains the following highlighted sections, set apart from the main text as sidebars:

- Media Adaptations: a list of important film and television adaptations of the novel, including source information. The list also includes stage adaptations, audio recordings, musical adaptations, etc.
- Topics for Further Study: a list of potential study questions or research topics dealing with the novel. This section includes questions related to other disciplines the student may be studying, such as American history, world history, science, math, government, business, geography, economics, psychology, etc.
- Compare and Contrast Box: an □at-a-glance□ comparison of the cultural and historical differences between the author's time and culture and late twentieth century/early twenty-first century Western culture. This box includes pertinent parallels between the major scientific, political, and cultural movements of the time or place the novel was written, the time or place the novel was set (if a historical work), and modern Western culture. Works written after 1990 may not have this box.
- What Do I Read Next?: a list of works that might complement the featured novel or serve as a contrast to it. This includes works by the same author and others, works of fiction and nonfiction, and works from various genres, cultures, and eras.

Other Features

NfS includes □The Informed Dialogue: Interacting with Literature,□ a foreword by Anne Devereaux Jordan, Senior Editor for Teaching and Learning Literature (TALL), and a founder of the Children's Literature Association. This essay provides an enlightening look at how readers interact with literature and how Novels for Students can help teachers show students how to enrich their own reading experiences.

A Cumulative Author/Title Index lists the authors and titles covered in each volume of the NfS series.

A Cumulative Nationality/Ethnicity Index breaks down the authors and titles covered in each volume of the NfS series by nationality and ethnicity.

A Subject/Theme Index, specific to each volume, provides easy reference for users who may be studying a particular subject or theme rather than a single work. Significant subjects from events to broad themes are included, and the entries pointing to the specific theme discussions in each entry are indicated in boldface.

Each entry has several illustrations, including photos of the author, stills from film adaptations (if available), maps, and/or photos of key historical events.

Citing Novels for Students

When writing papers, students who quote directly from any volume of Novels for Students may use the following general forms. These examples are based on MLA style; teachers may request that students adhere to a different style, so the following examples may be adapted as needed. When citing text from NfS that is not attributed to a particular author (i.e., the Themes, Style, Historical Context sections, etc.), the following format should be used in the bibliography section:

□Night.□ Novels for Students. Ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski. Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale, 1998. 234-35.

When quoting the specially commissioned essay from NfS (usually the first piece under the □Criticism□ subhead), the following format should be used:

Miller, Tyrus. Critical Essay on □Winesburg, Ohio.□ Novels for Students. Ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski. Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale, 1998. 335-39.

When quoting a journal or newspaper essay that is reprinted in a volume of NfS, the following form may be used:

Malak, Amin. □Margaret Atwood's □The Handmaid's Tale and the Dystopian Tradition,□ Canadian Literature No. 112 (Spring, 1987), 9-16; excerpted and reprinted in Novels for Students, Vol. 4, ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski (Detroit: Gale, 1998), pp. 133-36.

When quoting material reprinted from a book that appears in a volume of NfS, the following form may be used:

Adams, Timothy Dow. □Richard Wright: □Wearing the Mask,□ in Telling Lies in Modern American Autobiography (University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 69-83; excerpted and reprinted in Novels for Students, Vol. 1, ed. Diane Telgen (Detroit: Gale, 1997), pp. 59-61.

We Welcome Your Suggestions

The editor of Novels for Students welcomes your comments and ideas. Readers who wish to suggest novels to appear in future volumes, or who have other suggestions, are cordially invited to contact the editor. You may contact the editor via email at: ForStudentsEditors@gale.com. Or write to the editor at:

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